

# ASSESSING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATIONS U.S. STRATEGY TOWARD SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

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# **ASSESSING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATIONS U.S. STRATEGY TOWARD SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

**Thursday, November 17, 2022**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:27 a.m., in room HVC-210, The Capitol, Hon. Gregory W. Meeks (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman MEEKS. The Committee on Foreign Affairs will come to order.

And, without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any point.

And all members will have 5 days to submit statements, extraneous material, and questions for the record, subject to the length limitations in the rule. To insert something into the record, please have your staff email the previously mentioned address or contact for committee staff.

As a reminder to members, please keep your video function on at all times, even when you are not recognized by the chair.

Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves. And consistent with House rules, staff will only mute members as appropriate when they are not under recognition, to eliminate background noise.

I see that we have a quorum, and I now recognize myself for opening remarks.

Before, though, we begin the hearing, I want to recognize our newest member to the committee, and that is Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, from the great State of Florida.

We welcome you to this committee and look forward to working together with you. Congratulations. It is good to have you.

Pursuant to notice, the full committee meets today to discuss the United States' Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa. And so let me start by thanking Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Molly Phee, and USAID's Assistant Administrator for Africa, Monde Muyangwa, for appearing before our committee today.

Just a few months ago, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken traveled to South Africa to announce a renewed American approach to Sub-Saharan Africa that reframes the region's importance to the United States' national security interests.

And I want to get into the substance of the strategy in a moment, but I think it is important to discuss why this reframing is necessary in the first place. For far too long, perceptions of Africa have been shaped by outdated and uninformed depictions of a re-

gion in constant crisis. And roughly 4 years of disparaging comments and misguided policies of the previous Administration set relations with many of our African partners back decades.

To get back on the right track with our African partners, a serious and critical course correction was required, and that is why I applaud the Biden Administration for developing a bold and ambitious U.S. strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa.

Many observers agree that Africa, the second most populous region in the world, will shape the future. By 2050, 1 out of every 4 people on the globe will be African. African nations comprise nearly 30 percent of the United Nations. The U.N. estimates that there are roughly 650 million cell phone users in Africa, more than in the United States or Europe. When it comes to critical minerals and other resources, it is hard to overstate how important this region is to the global effort to modernize our economies and combat climate change.

Once the African Continental Free Trade Area is fully implemented, Africa stands to become the fifth largest economy in the world. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that foreign partners in the private sector and public sectors alike continue to expand their engagement with their presence in Africa. And while opportunities in Africa abound, we must be clear-eyed about the challenges that negatively affect stability and undermine economic growth.

When I meet with African leaders from across the continent, common themes emerge and continue to resonate with me. African people of all backgrounds and income levels favor democracy and strongly prefer America's democratic values, yet we continue to see governments in parts of Africa give way to autocratic and anti-democratic movements.

Africa has experienced more coups than any other region since 1950, with recent trends heading in the wrong direction. So we need to take the opportunity the strategy provides to acknowledge the governance challenges facing the region and identify what actions State and USAID should undertake to fortify democracy in Africa.

The demand signal for democracy is clear. We must step up to meet the moment. The United States is in a prime position to redouble efforts to strengthen democracy, support good governance, and address the conditions associated with democratic backsliding, like endemic poverty and human rights abuses.

I have always been a strong proponent of engaging our African partners with an emphasis on equity and agency, ensuring African stakeholders have a seat at the table and lead the change we all want to see in many parts of the continent.

What I find most promising about the Administration's strategy is that it outlines a clear and modern approach to enhancing our engagement in Africa and it rightly calls for leveraging the private sector and the African diaspora, bolstering civil society, supporting sustainable development, including through support for an equitable energy transition, strengthening trade and investment, and driving digital transformation on the continent.

What will be key for this discussion is how, how are the State Department and USAID deploying their tools and resources to

make this strategy successful; what resources are required to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in Africa; and how can Congress be most helpful in this effort.

So I look forward to the answers to these questions and the discussion that follows.

And I now will recognize Mr. McCaul for his opening statement.

Mr. McCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to our new committee room. I told the chairman, I think I'm cursed. When I chaired Homeland Security Committee, I got moved out of the beautiful committee room to here, but it is nice and it is close to votes, but it is great to see all of you back here again. And let me say, first, Africa, that—let me thank the witnesses too.

Ensuring strong engagement with our African partners has been a bipartisan priority, and for over two decades, both Republicans and Democratic Administrations, the U.S. has partnered with African nations to address key challenges.

Next year will be the 20th anniversary of President Bush's launch of PEPFAR, which as I talk to leaders in Africa say, saved a generation from extinction. I look forward to ensuring that this important work continues in the next Congress and being reauthorized.

The U.S. has a legacy of investment of which to be proud. In the last year, the United States provided over a billion COVID vaccines to African countries and funding to address unprecedented levels of food insecurity and famine in the Horn of Africa. But we need to also think long-term about our investments.

And while the U.S. offers partnership, the PRC and Russia seek to leverage their offers of financing and security guarantees for their own political, economic, and security priorities. A perfect example of this is the CCP's debt-trap diplomacy through their Belt and Road Initiative. And, Secretary, you and I talked about this, and if we are not on the field, Mr. Chairman, you cannot win, if you are not on the field. And we need to get on field.

And, again, when I meet with our partners and allies all over the world, they do ask—and ask why they are entering into these dangerous agreements with China, they tell me, again, because we are not there. And we need to be there. We cannot allow the CCP and Russia to exert their malign influence over the continent.

Promoting two-way trade and investment with African nations and creating economic opportunity must be a top priority. And that is why I am proud that my bill, the Championing American Business Through Diplomacy Act, was signed into law.

Earlier this year, I introduced legislation that codified the Prosper Africa initiative, and I want to thank Chairman Meeks for his cosponsorship and helping us get that marked up. This effort coordinates the various tools of the U.S. Government to speak with one voice and support U.S. companies looking to invest in Africa.

I have some concerns, Secretary, as you and I talked about, about the Development Finance Corporation, that I worked very hard and many members on this committee did, to get private investment. I believe this Administration was putting a lot of restrictions on that investment as it has to be certain types of energy and has to have all sorts of restrictions. And I have heard from the pri-

private sector that this has really stalled our ability to have that private investment.

I think that with the invasion of Ukraine by Putin and the world's rush to secure oil and gas from alternative regions reveals that we cannot really keep the DFC hamstrung from investing in traditional energy. It can only be green. We were in Romania. They wanted to have these small modular nuclear reactors, Madam Secretary, and we were told the Development Finance Corporation would not finance that because it was not, quote/unquote, green energy. However, nuclear power has zero carbon emissions, and even the EU Parliament voted that nuclear is green energy.

So I think that is an issue on energy we need to focus on. We still have the counterterrorism issues there that I dealt with when I chaired Homeland—ISIS, al-Qaeda. Now, anytime you have instability, poverty, you have these terror groups. Al Shabaab, well financed; ISIS affiliates are active in over 20 African countries, and they are growing.

Passing the Global Fragility Act was an important step to stabilize Africa through a whole-of-government approach. Back then it was Chairman Engel and Senator Graham and Coons and myself.

So I really look forward to hearing about the implementation of that as well, Madam Chair—Secretary, toward implementation in West Africa and Mozambique.

So proud that the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Act, which was stalled by the Senate last Congress, was enacted earlier this year to improve U.S. response to terror threats in the Sahel.

So we have many challenges, a lot of work to do. It is time to roll up our sleeves and get things done, and I thank both of you for being here today.

I yield back.

Chairman MEEKS. I thank the gentleman.

I will now recognize for 1 minute—the title is still the chair of the Africa Subcommittee, it soon will be the mayor of the city of Los Angeles. The Honorable Karen Bass is now recognized for 1 minute. Congratulations.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for convening this hearing and for the opportunity to speak on the importance of President Biden's Africa STRATEGY.

As noted in the Biden Administration's Africa strategy, it is impossible to meet this era's declining challenges without African contributions and leaderships. The strategy is a much needed effort to, quote, recast traditional U.S. policy priorities—democracy and governance, peace and security, trade and investment and development—as pathways to bolster the region's ability to solve global problems alongside the U.S.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have worked to shift the paradigm from seeing Africa as a continent that is defined by crisis, conflict, poverty, and corruption, to engaging Africa as a continent with immense opportunities for robust and mutually beneficial partnerships. I have led several delegations to the continent with Members of Congress, and every time they come back, they are always amazed at the richness of the continent.



But let me just conclude by thanking you. I know that this will probably be my last hearing. And the most difficult part of my decision to leave Congress was really because of the work of this committee.

And so I look forward to elevating international affairs in an international city. And I just want to express my appreciation to our wonderful chairman and ranking member, soon to switch roles, and soon to be Chairman Chris Smith, for the partnership that we have had over the last 12 years, and all the members of this committee. So thank you for the opportunity to address you.

Chairman MEEKS. We thank you, Chairwoman-mayor, for your dedication, for surely this is the most appropriate last committee hearing that you attend because of your focus, your life-long focus, even before you became a Member of Congress, to the Continent of Africa.

You have always been one that I depended upon and leaned on when it came to the continent, and your vision for the continent is absolutely, absolutely superb, and it leads to many of the things that has helped me as a Member of the House and as chair of this committee. And you will not escape, though, because I will still be calling the mayor of L.A. on various things, particularly as it regards the Continent of Africa.

So thank you for your service to the U.S. Congress, and thank you for your service to this committee. We are deeply indebted to you. Thank you very much.

Mr. McCAUL. May I?

Chairman MEEKS. Yes.

Mr. McCAUL. And if I could echo that sentiment. Karen, it has been a joy to work with you. Your positive energy is infectious. And we have worked on many initiatives related to Africa together that have, I think, made a difference, and that is what it is all about really.

I congratulate you on your new position as mayor of L.A. You may enjoy being an executive more than just one of 435. So we are going to miss you. I hope you come back to visit.

I yield back.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. And I will yield to a person who has been a partner because, you know, oftentimes when I talked to Representative Bass, the next mayor, she always told me how she worked very well with Mr. Smith over the years. And so I recognize now Representative Chris Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Karen, we are going to miss you. It has been a great partnership for many years, a dozen years. We have traveled together. I remember very well we traveled to Ethiopia. You came all the way from L.A., and as things turned out, you went back right away. I do not think you slept for about 3 days. We had some very good meetings with the new prime minister, unfortunately then he disappointed, but now we have a peace agreement that hopefully will flourish.

You are taking over what is the equivalent of a small country, 4 million people, and, you know, you have a lot of friends on both sides of the aisle, and it has always been a real joy to work with

you. Our staffs have worked very closely together, and I think that is extremely important.

So I am going to miss you, Karen, but do not be a stranger. Look forward to seeing you over and over again going forward.

Chairman MEEKS. Run that clock back to a minute. That is not his time.

Mr. SMITH. Oh, good. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Just a couple of things I would like to raise as we meet. It is good to see Ambassador Molly Phee. I remember when we met in Sudan in the past—South Sudan, I should say—and I appreciate your work, and, of course, to the—Muyangwa, congratulations to you for your work.

Just a couple of brief things because this is an important hearing, and I thank the chair for calling it.

As the primary author of the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, I am a little concerned that in the strategy—and I, you know, have read it, read it carefully—that religious freedom is not there.

And, you know, we have—I have, particularly in Nigeria and a number of other countries, whether it be Muslim on Muslim or Christian-Muslim fights, these issues have to be front and center and not in any way—we cannot look askance when Nigeria—and I disagree with the Administration when they got rid of CPC status for Nigeria. I think, you know, the country itself, particularly the Christians, there has been a spike in death to Christians that is because there are Christians in Nigeria. I hope that we can come back to redesignating—designating Buhari and his government as a CPC country, because they have not earned getting off that.

On Nigeria and on DR Congo real quick, I chaired a meeting on July 14 of the Tom Lantos Commission, and we focused on the cobalt mining. And we had a number of unbelievably incisive witnesses, including two DR Congolese who told us how 35-to 40,000—some estimates there—a little bit lower, but that is order of magnitude—children are in those mines getting cobalt, and who is running them? Chinese Communist Party. They are taking over because they want to have a monopoly on electric cars going forward. You know, if you want an electric car, great, but it shouldn't be on the backs of little children and people who are adults who are exploited as well.

So I hope we can really, really raise that issue to the highest possible level. Hearing about how kids are dying, getting cancer working in the mines without any kind of protection whatsoever. So I am deeply concerned about that as well.

And I thank you. I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields back.

I will now introduce our witnesses. Ambassador Molly Phee, she is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of minister counselor, and has served as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs since last September, and most recently served as deputy special representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation.

Her experience in African affairs include serving as U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan, deputy chief of mission in Ethiopia, and chief of staff—the special envoy for Sudan and South Sudan.

Assistant Secretary Phee has extensive experience in U.N. engagement in Africa and the Middle East, and began her career at several Middle Eastern posts, including Jordan, Egypt, and Kuwait.

Dr. Monde Muyangwa was appointed as Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Africa in September, and has over 25 years of leadership experience on Africa and U.S.-African relations, including in the areas of development, gender, education, housing, health, and nutrition.

She previously served as the director of the Africa Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center, academic dean at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, and professor of civil-military relations at ACSS.

She served on the board of trustees at Freedom House, the board of directors at the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, the International Advisory Council of Afrobarometer, and the Advisory Council in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

So I want to thank our witnesses for being here today. And I now yield to Ambassador, the Honorable Molly Phee—Deputy Secretary, I should say.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MOLLY PHEE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR THE BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Ms. PHEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McCaul, Subcommittee Chair Bass, Subcommittee Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for devoting your time today and to share your interest in Africa.

As you know, the Africa strategy of the Biden-Harris Administration is based on a simple but important premise. Building a 21st century partnership with Africa is critical to meeting this era's defining challenges and achieving results on our shared global priorities.

As Secretary Blinken has said, Africa is a geopolitical force that will shape the world's future. The continent is home to the fastest growing and youngest population in the world, enjoys breathtaking ecological diversity, and nurtures vibrant and historic cultures whose past is inseparably intertwined with our own.

The strategy commits to elevating, broadening, and deepening our partnerships with diverse African audiences, including notably the diaspora. We will prioritize listening and acting on what we hear. Even when we have disagreements, we will seize the opportunity to engage and discuss.

The Administration's National Security Strategy and the State Department-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa recognize the profound transformation of the continent, capture the region's importance to U.S. national security interests, and identify how we will boost Africa's ability to maximize opportunities and counter challenges.

The upcoming U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit is a prominent example of how we are putting this reframing into practice. President Biden also made this point at the U.N. when he announced U.S. support for permanent seats on the Security Council for countries in Africa.

The strategy's first objective is to foster openness and open societies. Building on the hunger of African publics for foundational values—democracy, transparency, accountability, equity, inclusivity, rule of law, anticorruption, and religious freedom—we will support those who understand that incorporating these values into governance is the best path to unlock the potential and prosperity of individuals and societies.

Choice is also central to our second objective, to deliver democratic and security dividends. Poor governance and abusive security forces render countries vulnerable to instability. We will direct U.S. programming to address the drivers of conflict, strengthen democratic institutions, and invest in the development of local security forces that are capable and accountable. Thanks to Congress, we now have an innovative new tool with the Global Fragility Act.

Poor governance also affords space for malign actors such as the Kremlin-backed Wagner Group. We are engaging our African partners to counter Russia's malign influence. We are also working intentionally to present our African partners with alternatives to substandard Chinese practices while remaining open to collaboration when U.S., Chinese, and African interests align.

Our third objective is to advance pandemic recovery and economic prosperity. We have provided millions of COVID-19 doses and billions of dollars in COVID-related support. The additional resources provided by Congress for food security and humanitarian assistance have been invaluable in mitigating the compounding effects of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine.

We are committed to helping our African partners strengthen health systems for the next global health challenge, building on the foundation of decades of investment. One example, in recent weeks, the State Department has been a leader in the U.S. Government team, helping Uganda effectively respond to an Ebola outbreak.

The strategy also includes plans to promote economic growth, especially job creation. We are working through multilateral banks, as well as U.S. Government programs you know well—the DFC, MCC, Prosper Africa, Power Africa, and Feed the Future. We need to do more and better in this space, and we look for your support and guidance as we seek to advance new initiatives such as PGII.

Finally, in line with the fourth pillar, we will support conservation, climate adaptation, and a just energy transition. At COP 27 last week, President Biden announced more than \$150 million to accelerate the implementation of the President's emergency plan for adaptation and resilience across Africa. This funding will help address what African counterparts highlight as their most urgent need in responding to the climate crisis, especially facilitating access to finance for populations vulnerable to climate change.

As we enter this decisive decade, we firmly believe that Africans should and must have a seat at the table. Our challenges are shared and so too should be our solutions. I look forward to addressing your questions.

And, Mr. Chairman, if I might, I would like to speak on behalf of the State Department to honor and thank Congresswoman Bass for her leadership on Africa issues. I well remember when she and Congressman Smith visited me in Juba, a difficult place to be, and their engagement there, as it has been throughout the continent,

has been so important. And if I might presume to speak on behalf of our African friends, I am sure they would want me to wish her congratulations and best wishes.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Phee follows:]

**Opening Statement of**  
**Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Molly Phee**  
**U.S. Department of State**  
**House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing**  
**U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa**  
**November 17, 2022**

Thank you, Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, Subcommittee Chair Bass, Subcommittee Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee.

The Biden-Harris Administration's Africa strategy is based on a simple but important premise: Building a 21<sup>st</sup> century partnership with Africa is critical to meeting this era's defining challenges and achieving results on our shared global priorities. As Secretary Blinken has said, Africa is a geopolitical force that will shape the world's future. The continent is home to the fastest growing and youngest population in the world, enjoys breathtaking ecological diversity, and nurtures vibrant and historic cultures whose past is inseparably intertwined with our own.

The strategy commits to elevating, broadening, and deepening our partnerships with diverse African audiences. We will prioritize listening and acting on what we hear. Even when we have disagreements, we will seize the opportunity to engage and discuss. The Biden-Harris Administration's National Security Strategy and the State Department-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa recognize the profound transformation of the continent, capture the region's importance to U.S. national security interests, and identify how we will boost Africa's ability to maximize opportunities and counter challenges. The upcoming U.S. Africa Leaders Summit is a prominent example of how we are putting this reframing into practice. President Biden also made this point at the UN when he announced U.S.

support for permanent seats on the Security Council for countries in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The strategy's first objective is to foster openness and open societies. Building on the hunger of African publics for foundational values – democracy, transparency, accountability, equity, inclusivity, rule of law, anti-corruption – we will support those who understand that incorporating these values into governance is the best path to unlock the potential and prosperity of individuals and societies.

Choice is also central to our second objective, to deliver democratic and security dividends. Poor governance and abusive security forces render countries vulnerable to instability. We will direct U.S. programming to address the drivers of conflict, strengthen democratic institutions, and invest in the development of local security forces that are capable and accountable. Thanks to Congress, we now have an innovative new tool with the Global Fragility Act.

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Our third objective is to advance pandemic recovery and economic prosperity. We have provided more than 186 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to 44 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and nearly \$2.7 billion in COVID-related support. The additional resources provided by Congress for food security and humanitarian

assistance have been invaluable in mitigating the compounding effects of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine.

We are committed to helping our African partners strengthen health systems for the next global health challenge, building on the foundation of decades of investment. One example: in recent weeks, the State Department has been leader in the U.S. government team helping Uganda effectively respond to an Ebola outbreak.

The strategy also includes plans to promote economic growth, especially job creation. We are working through multilateral banks as well as U.S. government programs you know well – the DFC, MCC, Prosper Africa, Power Africa, and Feed the Future. We need to do more and better in this space and we look for your support and guidance as we seek to advance new initiatives, including PGII.

Finally, in line with the fourth pillar, we will support conservation, climate adaptation, and a just energy transition. At COP 27 last week President Biden announced more than \$150 million to accelerate the implementation of the President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience across Africa. This funding will help address what African counterparts highlight as their most urgent needs in responding to the climate crisis, such as facilitating access to finance for populations vulnerable to climate change.

We can only meet these ambitious goals by working together and harnessing the pathbreaking spirit of both the American people and our African friends. As we enter this decisive decade, we firmly believe that Africans should and must have a



seat at the table. Our challenges are shared and so too should be our solutions. I look forward to addressing your questions.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you. And thank you for your remarks. I now recognize Assistant Administrator Muyangwa.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MONDE MUYANGWA, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE BUREAU FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you.

Good morning, Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the new U.S. strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa and for your longstanding bipartisan commitment to the African continent.

I arrived at USAID only a few weeks after the new strategy was launched. It comes at a crucial moment and underscores my long-held belief that the future of the United States and Africa are inextricably linked.

The COVID-19 pandemic has erased years of development gains, and recent conflict has killed thousands and displaced millions more. Roughly 21 million people face starvation in the Horn of Africa, and we are also seeing the setbacks to democracy as well as a rise of malign actors.

Yet the Africa that I know is also characterized by resilience, transformation, and promise. African nations hold significant political heft at international organizations, and the African Continental Free Trade Area has created the world's fifth largest economy. And despite democratic setbacks, African citizens are demanding governments that respect the rights and dignity of all people.

The U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa recognizes both challenges and opportunities facing Africa and reflects its influence on the international stage. Let me walk through how USAID is aligned with the strategy and highlight our way forward.

First, the strategy commits to promoting fair and open societies, and USAID will continue to strengthen transparency and accountability. And we are working with civil society partners to improve the information ecosystem, including training journalists and others to stop the spread of misinformation.

We will help countries address challenges of digital infrastructure and increase gender equality and inclusion. We will also strengthen the rule of law and independent judiciaries to address corruption and safeguard individual rights.

Second, the strategy recognizes the essential role that effective democracy and governance play in peace and security. So we will continue to promote democracy and good governance and collaborate with the Department of State and Defense and other international partners to advance peace and security in Africa and to support locally led peace-building efforts through the Global Fragility Act.

Third, the strategy emphasizes the need to continue our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the U.S. Government vaccine effort Global VAX, over 229 million vaccines have been delivered to Africa. Public-private partnerships and engagement with key regional organizations like the West Africa Health Organization will continue to be essential.

And when it comes to expanding economic opportunity, the U.S. Government, through Prosper Africa, Power Africa, and other USAID programs, will continue to strengthen trade ties and improve the business-enabling environment. Both Prosper Africa and Power Africa have already yielded impressive results. Since Prosper Africa's launch, the U.S. Government has helped close 800 trade and investment deals across 45 African countries, for an estimated value of \$50 billion. Power Africa has connected more than 33 million homes and businesses to on-and off-grid solutions, bringing first-time electricity to over 159 million people across the country.

Feed the Future has expanded to eight new African countries and continues to strengthen food systems across the continent.

The Young African Leaders Initiative has trained more than 22,000 youth, who bring innovation, creative energy, and opportunity to civil society and economies across Africa.

Fourth, the strategy recognizes the need for climate adaptation, conservation, and the restoration of ecosystems and natural resources. USAID will expand engagement on climate change issues, especially adaptation, and build on our work in conservation and biodiversity. The U.S. Government recently renewed its long-standing commitment to the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of the Congo Basin.

Power Africa will work closely with countries to diversify energy sources, advance the use of renewable energy, and increase the efficiency of existing systems while balancing gas to power infrastructure to help advance energy security.

As you can see, USAID programs are well positioned to support the objectives in the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet it will not be business as usual. We must step up our engagement with African partners, diversify the breadth of countries that we work with, and engage with medium and small States to advance shared priorities, including the Africa Union's Agenda 2063.

I am deeply committed to USAID's mission and to advancing the U.S. strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa. I thank you for your continued support of USAID's work, and I welcome your questions.

As I conclude, I too would like to join Assistant Secretary Molly Phee in thanking Congressman Bass for her work to advance and support U.S.-Africa relations, and we wish you well in your new job.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Muyangwa follows:]

Written Statement of Monde Muyangwa, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa,  
United States Agency for International Development  
Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee  
*Assessing the Biden Administration's U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*  
November 17, 2022

Good morning, Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the new *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*. I appreciate your longstanding bipartisan commitment to the African continent.

I arrived at USAID only a few weeks after the new Strategy was launched—without question an exciting time to be joining the Africa Bureau. The core of the Strategy underscores something I have advocated for throughout my career—a recognition that the future of the United States and the future of the African continent are inextricably linked. Our partnership is critical to addressing shared global challenges.

The new *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* comes at a crucial moment. The COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed fragile health systems, caused tremendous loss of life, erased several years of development gains, and thrown millions of Africans into poverty. Insecurity, violent extremism, and conflict in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Central Africa, and northern Mozambique have killed thousands and displaced millions more, resulting in humanitarian crises compounded by climate change. Approximately 21 million people are on the brink of starvation in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia due to a historic drought caused by an unprecedented four consecutive failed rainy seasons. Furthermore, the continent is witnessing setbacks to democracy and the increased role of malign international actors, especially the People's Republic of China and Russia.

Yet the Africa that I know is also characterized by resilience, transformation, and promise. Africa is home to some of the fastest growing markets in the world, and the world's largest population of young people. This is a generation of young people with the potential to power the continent's recovery from the pandemic, while combatting climate change and building a more equitable future for their communities. Africa also holds the planet's second largest rainforest, the Congo Basin - a vast rainforest is critical to stemming climate change and is home to 30 percent of minerals needed for 21st century renewable energy.

African women are leading in more spaces and at more levels of government and society, working to safeguard and accelerate gender equality gains, even as they lead the response to COVID-19 as frontline health workers. The nations of Africa hold significant political heft at international organizations as one of the largest regional voting groups in the UN, holding three seats on the UN Security Council, and African leaders as directors of the World Health

Organization and the World Trade Organization. The recent formation of the African Continental Free Trade Area created the world's fifth largest economy with a GDP of \$3.4 trillion and growing influence in global entertainment and digital finance.

And despite democratic setbacks, African citizens are demanding governments that respect the rights and dignity of all people. The recently elected presidents of Malawi and Zambia are leading the way, after unseating autocratic incumbents by running on platforms promising to fight corruption, spur economic growth, and strengthen transparency and accountability.

The *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* recognizes both challenges and opportunities facing Africa, and reflects Africa's influence on the international stage. With African agency as a guiding principle, it lays the groundwork for a true partnership with African nations founded on mutual respect, strong economic and security ties, and promotion of and respect for human rights and rule of law for all people.

The Strategy is centered around four objectives: fostering openness and open societies; delivering democratic and security dividends; advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity; and supporting conservation, climate adaptation, and a just energy transition.

Let me walk through how USAID is aligned with the Strategy, and highlight our way forward.

#### **Fostering Openness and Open Societies**

First, the Strategy commits to promoting fair and open societies.

USAID will continue to partner with governments and civil society to strengthen governments, civil society, and citizens' capacity to advance transparency and accountability. This includes tackling issues of digital authoritarianism, anti-corruption, and mis/dis/mal-information. In places such as Mali, where this type of content is rife, USAID is already working with trusted local civil society partners to improve the information ecosystem and combat misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation by training journalists and individuals, especially young people, to recognize and not spread such information.

We will also help countries take on the challenges of digital infrastructure to ensure that their Internet and information and communications technology is secure, reliable and interoperable, and protects users from digital abuse or harassment.

Our programming will increase accountability, governance, gender equality and social inclusion across all sectors in which we work—from enhanced oversight of health commodities procurement to strengthening the business enabling environment. We will increase transparency on large infrastructure transactions by strengthening government procurement laws and developing the tools and expertise needed to analyze complex international infrastructure projects, including safeguards against human rights and other abuses.

We will strengthen the rule of law and independent judiciaries to address corruption and safeguard individual rights against a backdrop of democratic backsliding.

In Malawi, for example, we are working with the government to implement its commitments to combat corruption and reform institutions. Through the joint U.S.-UK Tackling Serious and Organized Corruption project, we work with Malawian law enforcement to investigate and prosecute complex financial crimes. We are also partnering with local governments and communities to address bottlenecks to effective delivery of services such as health and education.

Meanwhile, in Ghana, our programs strengthen the effectiveness of dozens of metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies, improving their responsiveness to citizens' priorities, feedback, and concerns, strengthening social cohesion between and among groups. This has made a real difference, especially in agriculture, where women's access to land and cultivation of marketable crops has grown as a direct outcome of these efforts.

We will cooperate with countries and encourage them to use their natural resources in a transparent and equitable manner. USAID is actively engaged in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, a voluntary global partnership between governments, extractive industry companies, and civil society to promote the transparent and accountable management of oil, gas, and mineral resources. We have supported country-level implementation in Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Zambia. This collaborative oversight is foundational for harnessing the benefits of extractives so that they serve the people.

#### **Delivering Democratic and Security Dividends**

The Strategy's second objective is to advance democratic efforts and tackle security challenges by anticipating, preventing, and addressing emerging and long-running conflicts. This link between democratic and security dividends explicitly recognizes the essential role that effective democracy and governance play in advancing peace and security in Africa.

More importantly, we will look to African countries and regional and multilateral institutions to advance peace and security in Africa. The African Union, regional communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and other African-led organizations are already playing critical roles in securing and maintaining peace in the region.

USAID partners closely with governments, communities, and local leaders to amplify their efforts to address conflicts at the local level before they spread. We look to reduce opportunities for other state and non-state actors (including Al Shabab, JNIM, or the self-styled Islamic State in West Africa) who may sow chaos to advance their ill-intended goals.

In places such as Somalia, USAID programming addresses the drivers of extremism by helping governments efficiently provide services and by giving citizens access to greater economic, social, and political representation opportunities, while also investing in resilience.

We will continue to support locally-led prevention and peacebuilding efforts to mitigate conflict through the Global Fragility Act in Coastal West Africa and Mozambique. Under the *U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability*, we will work with the Departments of State and Defense and other Departments and Agencies to address the underlying causes of violence and instability to prevent conflicts and crises from emerging or worsening. As we finalize and begin to implement 10-year plans in partnership with local stakeholders in Mozambique and Coastal West Africa, we are also drawing from lessons learned in the Sahel and elsewhere, and putting local sources of knowledge at the center of our planning.

#### **Advancing Pandemic Recovery and Economic Opportunity**

The Strategy also emphasizes the need to continue our response to the COVID-19 pandemic while countering its economic and social impacts. Millions of African citizens who were thrown into poverty by the COVID-19 pandemic are still working to recover. Their plight has become increasingly dire as Putin's unjustified war on Ukraine has exacerbated food insecurity and supply chain problems.

Building on long-standing support for health and health systems, USAID will continue to close the gaps in pandemic preparedness and response capacity. As a result of the U.S. government vaccine effort, Global VAX, which prioritized 11 countries in Africa, over 229 million vaccines were delivered to Africa and 23 percent of Africans are now vaccinated for COVID-19. We continue to partner with health authorities to address vaccine supply chains and uptake, as well as diagnostics, surveillance, and training. Public-private partnerships and our engagement with key regional organizations, such as Africa CDC and the West Africa Health Organization, will continue to be essential to this effort.

USAID works closely with countries in the region to strengthen health systems. Strong health systems are the foundation upon which effective pandemic preparedness must be built. Beyond providing quality services to respond to ongoing health needs, ranging from maternal health and family planning services to routine childhood immunization, strong health systems allow countries to mitigate the spillover of viruses from animals to humans, detect outbreaks early through strengthened diagnostics and surveillance systems, and respond quickly to control infectious disease outbreaks through infection prevention and control; risk communication; vaccines and therapeutics.

And when it comes to expanding economic opportunity and investment, the U.S. government, through Prosper Africa, Power Africa, and other USAID trade and investment activities, assists

businesses as they rebound, strengthens trade ties, and improves the business enabling environment to attract sustainable financing.

Both Prosper and Power Africa have already yielded impressive results. Since Prosper Africa's launch in 2019, the U.S. government has helped to close 800 trade and investment deals across 45 African countries for an estimated value of \$50 billion. Through a partnership with USAID, Virginia-based Red River Foods, a leading global supplier of plant-based food, is bolstering the production and processing of cashews in West Africa. With a \$3 million investment from USAID, Red River Foods is investing an additional \$47 million to expand and establish exports of cashews sourced from nearly 11,000 farmers, processors, and suppliers working in Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin, providing value chain actors with a steady and higher income. This co-investment will create nearly \$32 million in exports and at least 482 jobs in the United States and Africa.

Going forward, the Prosper Africa initiative will scale up partnerships with the private sector to facilitate deals, mobilize U.S. private capital, empower women economically, and sustainably strengthen business and investment climates that benefit both sides of the Atlantic.

Power Africa has connected more than 33 million homes and businesses to on- and off-grid solutions, bringing first-time electricity to over 159 million people across sub-Saharan Africa. Power Africa continues to promote mutual economic prosperity between the United States and African partners through technical expertise, innovation, investment, and enabling environment reform.

We will also invest in people through quality education, skill development, and nutrition and food systems that have been undercut by the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine. Feed the Future has expanded to eight new countries in Africa and will continue to build stronger food systems and improve nutrition across the continent. Our investments in education and youth prioritize increasing access to quality, relevant, and safe learning opportunities, and promote social well-being, particularly for vulnerable populations. The Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) has trained more than 22,000 youth across the continent since 2015. These YALI alumni bring innovation, creative energy, and opportunities to civil society and economies across Africa. It is worth noting that half of YALI alumni are women, and YALI continues to increase recruitment of LGBTQI+ youth and youth with disabilities.

#### **Support Conservation, Climate Adaptation, and a Just Energy Transition**

Finally, the Strategy recognizes the need for climate adaptation, conservation, and restoration of the continent's ecosystems and rich natural resources. The impacts of climate change are being felt across Africa—from devastating flooding in Nigeria, South Sudan, and Sudan, to crippling drought in Madagascar and the Horn of Africa. Although Africa has extremely low emissions per capita, it will suffer some of the most severe effects of climate change.



USAID will expand engagement on climate change issues, especially adaptation, and build on our longstanding work in conservation and biodiversity. Together with the interagency, private sector, and civil society partners, we will identify an appropriate mix of energy solutions for the countries of the region.

Already, USAID is working to address the impact of climate change in Africa. Programs like those in Burkina Faso and Niger have helped farmers improve soil fertility, which has led to an average increase of 700 percent in their sales.

With the help of our partners, we will focus on conservation of the region's rich forests and ecosystems. Local engagement will continue to be particularly critical as more than half of Africa's population depends on forests for their livelihood, and more than one-third of Africa's population depends on wild fisheries for food security.

Efforts such as USAID's Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) help galvanize local communities, civil society, the private sector, and governments to protect natural resources that are critical to reducing the impact of carbon emissions and climate change. The U.S. government recently renewed its longstanding commitment to the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of the Congo Basin with the launch of the fourth phase of CARPE. CARPE IV will build on earlier successes and lessons learned, and support the vision of a Congo Basin with healthy ecosystems and dynamic local leadership that supports stability and prosperity in communities.

Power Africa will work closely with countries across the region to diversify energy sources, advance the use of renewable energy, and increase the efficiency of existing systems while balancing gas-to-power infrastructure to help the countries advance their energy security. USAID's support to Power Africa's Just Energy Transition work in South Africa will soon be augmented by an additional \$45 million. We have also used smaller amounts of funding to leverage much-needed investment across the region.

As you can see, USAID's programs in Africa are well positioned to support the objectives in the *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*. Yet it will not be business as usual.

In fact, how we will accomplish these objectives is as important as what we will do. For starters, we must step up our engagement with African partners, affirm their agency, and elevate our partnership. Relationships matter. Even when we disagree on issues, we must be able to discuss areas of common interest and areas of concern. We must listen more, diversify the breadth of countries that we work with in Africa, and engage with medium and small states to advance our shared priorities, including the AU's Agenda 2063.

The U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, which President Biden will host next month, demonstrates our commitment to elevate and engage with senior African government officials, private sector

actors, civil society organizations, African women, youth, and diaspora to provide opportunities to coordinate and advance our shared interests. The Summit will include the U.S.-Africa Business Forum, which will focus on advancing two-way trade and investment partnerships that bolster Africa's role in the global economy. The Business Forum will feature a Deal Room, hosted by Prosper Africa, for announcements of bold, new commitments from U.S. and African businesses, governments, and investors. The Summit will also include a Civil Society Forum, highlighting the vital role that civil society plays in the region and in the partnership between the United States and African states.

We will place a renewed focus on public-private partnerships and new ideas. Our approach has proven that U.S. states and cities can indeed play a vital role in moving our shared development agenda forward in Africa. In fact, Prosper Africa and Power Africa have helped secure investments in Africa from the City and County of San Francisco Employees' Retirement Fund.

The new Strategy marks an important first step in the journey of transforming the U.S.-Africa relationship. It calls for expanding and modernizing U.S. partnerships in Africa, working together to find innovative solutions to new challenges, harnessing new research and technologies, and investing in long-term sources of strength while meeting immediate needs. It calls for deeper engagement with the continent, and Africa-led solutions. This Strategy reinvigorates and modernizes our relationship as it strengthens our longstanding historical and cultural connections based on shared values.

I am deeply committed to USAID's mission and our role in advancing the *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*. Thank you for your continued support of USAID's work in Africa, and the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

Thank you both for your testimony.

I will now recognize members for 5 minutes each pursuant to House rules, and all time yielded is for the purposes of questioning our witnesses. And I will recognize members by committee seniority, alternating between Democrats and Republicans.

And please note that I am going to be somewhat strict in enforcing the 5-minute time limitation for questioning, including with myself. But I will start by recognizing myself.

Let me say ask this question. You know, the strategy that the Administration will redouble its efforts to ensure it has sufficient human and financial resources to plan, organize, and execute. Now, I want to make sure so I address this question to both of you. What deficits do you see in your staffing or funding in order to achieve the strategy's objectives, and what can we do to fill those gaps here in Congress? And also, how will the State Department and USAID ensure that—something that I have been on—that recruitment, retention, and incentives in your respective African bureaus are sufficient to meet the strategy's objectives?

Ms. PHEE. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank you for your attention to this issue, because to realize our ambitious goals, we do need resources.

As you know, the State Department has a deficit of personnel related to decisions that were taken in the past Administration. This Administration asked for and received funding for 500 new positions, but we still have a challenge in meeting, particularly at the mid-level grade, filling our positions.

So the Administration, and under Secretary Blinken's leadership, is working very hard on both recruitment and retention. He has, as you know, appointed a diversity officer to address that aspect of recruitment and retention. So we continue to focus on building up the State Department core so that we can staff our embassies and staff the Bureau.

Second, on resources, Congress is very generous with resources for health. There is a lot of money earmarked for health, also education. I think we would benefit from more resources in the democracy area. That would help us address the issues of backsliding that you identified in your opening statement.

Thank you.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you, Chairman Meeks, for that question. We have had several thousand positions, I think, that have been approved for the agency, and we are in the process of recruiting for those positions. That is going to take a while, but those efforts are definitely underway. We are also looking at ensuring that, as we recruit, issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are well reflected because that strengthens the outcomes of the work that we are doing.

And as the assistant secretary mentioned, and as you have all mentioned in your remarks, the question of democracy and democratic backsliding on the continent is critical. And so we are looking at ways of how we can bring more resources, energy to really attacking those issues, to arrest democratic backsliding.

And so we are going to continue to look for your continued advocacy on those issues and as we work through how best to arrest this democratic backsliding on the continent.

Chairman MEEKS. So one of the things that has always—you know, that has interested me, because there are, you know, different things that are taking place on different parts of the continent. But private sector, it seems to me, when you look at the future, you know, as we talked about it—I talked about it in my opening statements and Secretary Phee also—it is there. And sometimes the risk factors—and I think that it has been somewhat outdated, some of the risk factors.

So can you tell us what roles that State and USAID should and/or could play in educating the private sector on the opportunities that exist on the continent and as far as also the perception of risk as we get ready to get into the summit?

All the African leaders I talked to say they want investment, they need private sector investment to help them grow their economies, to make a difference. And we see others who are in there, other governments, like China, who is not doing the right thing in that regards, but because of the vacuum, they are able to—can you give us a response to that?

Ms. PHEE. Sure. I think it is clear that through the discussions that have taken place at the G7, that there is a general recognition that we all need to do more, our like-minded partners, on trade and investment in Africa. And there will be a day devoted, an Africa Business Forum, during the leaders summit, where we hope to create real opportunities for American companies to engage African leaders.

And we also need to continue to remind African leaders that they need to take steps to create, what the jargon is, an enabling environment to attract that private investment.

I think the area where we see a lot of engagement now that is new is the climate area. As you just learned when you were in Sharm el-Sheikh, and as the ranking member and I discussed, there is a lot of interest in our private sector, also in our philanthropic community, to try and match U.S. Government investment in that space. So I think that is a growth area for us moving forward in the future.

And last, I would mention the Africa Free—the Continental Free Trade Area. As we look toward AGOA expiration or renewal in 2025, I think there might be some opportunities to link our engagement on trade preferences with the building of that free trade area that benefits both Africans and Americans.

Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you. My time is expired.

I now yield to Mr. McCaul.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first, Secretary, just ask you about the Ethiopia peace agreement that was signed. Can you give us an update as to whether that is effective and how is it being implemented?

And as I understand it, we still cannot get the humanitarian aid into Tigray at the scale necessary.

Ms. PHEE. We are very pleased with the outcome of the AU-led efforts first on November 2 in Pretoria, where a cessation of hos-

ilities agreement was agreed, and we have seen that take effect, and then of followup discussions in Nairobi on the implementation of the agreement on November 12.

We are very lucky to have the leadership of Kenya and South Africa and the African Union to help the parties. As you know, we also contributed to this positive outcome.

Aid stopped going into Tigray on August 24 when hostilities began. It is urgent that it be resumed and be unhindered and that there also be restoration of services.

Those were key elements of the discussion in Nairobi on November 12, and we already are seeing movement of aid into Mekelle and other towns in Tigray, and we expect that to increase in the days and weeks ahead. That is part of the agreement.

Mr. McCAUL. Well, that is certainly encouraging. If I can move to, you know, kind of followup on what the chairman was talking about. You know, I passed the Championing American Business Through Diplomacy Act and the Prosper Africa Act. I have already expressed to you my somewhat disappointment with the Development Finance Corporation's inability to do this. But these are two other pieces of legislation to get more private investment which will stabilize, you know, Africa.

And can you tell us—and I think this will be for both of you. And I know you mentioned that in maybe 20 different countries that the Prosper Africa Act was being effective. But can you maybe give us a progress report on those two?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you for that question, Representative McCaul. So Prosper Africa is our primary engagement tool on the economic front with Africa, and we are really looking to boost those efforts in terms of its engagement and contributions to two-way trade with the continent.

In that regard, we are focusing on three priorities. The first is mobilizing U.S. institutional investments to the continent in three key sectors—climate, health, and sustainable infrastructure. The second is really looking for ways to fostering U.S. investments toward African innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in the digital space, which we think is going to drive Africa's digital revolution. And then third is boosting African exports to the United States by connecting the supply chain a little bit more tightly there.

So those are three areas that we are looking at, and we feel that if we do that, we are also going to bring in AGOA, as well as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, they are having a much more cohesive approach.

Mr. McCAUL. Secretary?

Ms. PHEE. I would just add that at the upcoming leaders summit, Ambassador Tai will host a meeting with her African counterparts to talk about how we can do more in the trade space, and just to affirm for you my commitment and the commitment of the Administration to do better in engaging the private sector so that we achieve our shared goals.

Mr. McCAUL. Thank you. I know the chairman mentioned this as well, that when we meet with the Ambassadors, they all echo that, and, you know, it is Central America too. I mean, it is a common theme, but I do think in areas where stability is key, it would

help stabilize the continent and some of these countries where if they become destabilized—and many are—you are just going to breed, you know, crime, terrorism, no governance, and create problems for the world.

So, anyway, with that, I just want to say thanks to the two of you. And I will yield back.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize Representative Brad Sherman from California for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. It is, of course, natural that the Congress bemoan that Karen Bass is leaving us, but she is coming to us in Los Angeles. Many of you would like to have a mayor as good as Karen Bass.

There are many issues in Africa, but I am going to devote my 5 minutes to the conflict in Ethiopia and Tigray, which is the bloodiest conflict in the world this decade.

We have seen some food get in, and I hope that we also focus on the medicine getting in as well.

I want to focus on Eritrea. Our embassy in Asmara has verified that Eritrean forces have been in northern Ethiopia, that they have blocked humanitarian assistance, that they committed human rights abuses, including rape and the killing of children.

There is no legitimate reason for Eritrean troops to be in any part of Ethiopia. I am, of course, hopeful that they will withdraw their troops, but they are not a party to the agreements that the assistant secretary has cited.

Assistant Secretary Phee, will—we support—and will you support—additional sanctions on Eritrea if they fail to withdraw their troops, including sanctions on President Afwerki himself and on mining in Eritrea?

Ms. PHEE. Thank you, Congressman. Absolutely, we concur with your assessment of the negative role of Eritrea in Ethiopia. It is, I think, a positive development that as part of these discussions the issue of foreign forces is part of the agreement and the withdrawal of foreign forces, but—

Mr. SHERMAN. But if Eritrea does not withdraw—

Ms. PHEE. Yes, yes. Yes.

Mr. SHERMAN [continuing]. You would—we would do those sanctions?

I would point out that we could look at U.N. Security Council efforts. Of course, Russia would veto because Eritrea is one of the five countries in the world to actually vote against the Ukraine resolution.

We could include not only that, but we could look at an anti-shipping campaign, not aimed at ships bringing food or medicine but those bringing luxury goods to Asmara.

For 2 years, the Ethiopian Government has used hunger as a weapon. We have to have a contingency plan should the Ethiopian Government fail to meet its conditions under these agreements.

Assistant Secretary Phee, will you commit to not restoring AGOA and not supporting IMF, World Bank, et cetera, loans to Ethiopia until the Ethiopian Government fulfills its obligations under the agreement, including humanitarian aid, protection for ci-

vilians, human rights monitoring, and a restoration of services, including the internet.

Ms. PHEE. Yes. We have made clear to leaders of the Ethiopian Government that implementation—full implementation of the agreement reached in Pretoria and elaborated in Nairobi is essential to restoring the partnership that we previously enjoyed.

Mr. SHERMAN. We have got tens of thousands of Tigrayans, ethnic Tigrayans, in other parts of Ethiopia that have been put in detention centers. The U.N. International Commission for Human Rights on Ethiopia in September of this year said that the detentions are ongoing and that reliable information indicates that torture is occurring at these facilities.

Will you commit to not supporting lifting AGOA and not supporting international lending until these ethnic Tigrayans are released?

Ms. PHEE. Yes. This is part of our dialog with the Ethiopian Government and with all parties who committed abuses during this terrible conflict.

Mr. SHERMAN. And then there is the disputed area of Western Tigray. We saw ethnic cleansing there in November 2020. The agreement calls for a constitutional resolution as to which regional government should control Western Tigray. That could very well mean a referendum.

Wouldn't any such referendum have to include only those people who lived there before the ethnic cleansing, rather than excluding those who have been driven from their homes and including those who moved in after November 2020?

Ms. PHEE. Congressman, I know that issue is going to be discussed by the parties, as you said, under their constitution, and I do not believe the details about how they would conduct any referendum or address resolution of that dispute have yet been determined. So I am not in a position to address specifically—

Mr. SHERMAN. And—and—

Ms. PHEE [continuing]. A hypothetical scenario at this point.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time is expired.

I now recognize Representative Chris Smith from New Jersey, who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights, for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

As I mentioned earlier, cobalt is heavily concentrated in DRC. Most cobalt is processed in the People's Republic of China by the Chinese Communist Party. They are succeeding in creating a monopoly. EVs became the largest end users of cobalt last year, 34 percent, followed by smartphones 15 percent, and laptops and desktop computers by 9 percent.

At our hearing, one of our witnesses from the The Sentry said, imagine you are a second grader being forced to spend all day tunneling in a dangerous mine with little to no safety equipment in an area that has many known collapses, with soldiers illegally intimidating and abusing minors and other civilians.

My question is, what are we doing to stop it? Is President Tshisekedi complicit in any way, shape, or form with this outrageous exploitation of children and adults in the cobalt mines in DRC?

Ms. PHEE. Thank you, Congressman Smith, for raising this critical and tragic issue. The U.S. Department of Labor is engaged with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo to try and improve standards, working standards in these mines. We recognize that this is unacceptable practice, and we are working with the government to try—

Mr. SMITH. And we have had serious reports that Tshisekedi is involved with this, he is corrupt, and my question is, what is your findings on that? If you have a President who allows the Chinese to abuse your own children, that is unconscionable.

Ms. PHEE. I know that President Tshisekedi has reached out to the United States, told us that we would be a preferred partner in investment in these mines, which I understand to be an implicit recognition of the challenges and poor practices of Chinese investment. So we are working hard to try and take him up on that offer.

Mr. SMITH. But, again, how do you assess the President's role?

Ms. PHEE. I am not aware of direct Presidential involvement, but let me look at that specifically and come back to you.

Mr. SMITH. Could you? It is extraordinarily important.

Ms. PHEE. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. You know, with the elections coming up in December 2023 in DR Congo, I know the Catholic and the Protestant churches have combined. Are we going to work with them to make sure that that is a free, fair, and inclusive election?

Ms. PHEE. That is why we asked Secretary Blinken to travel to Kinshasa in August, to make clear our expectations that the upcoming election be free and fair and peaceful.

We continue to engage with the government, and Dr. Monde could talk a little bit about USAID's support for the Electoral Commission. But absolutely we share those goals and are working I think diligently to try and achieve them.

Ms. MUYANGWA. And we recognize the importance and some of the challenges of the upcoming elections, so we are working to strengthen the electoral management body in the DRC to ensure that they have the capacity to hold free, fair, and transparent elections.

We also continue to engage with officials from the DRC on reinforcing the same—

Mr. SMITH. Again, probably the most credible entity in DRC are the churches, the faith community, and they have done, against all odds, yeomen's work in the past. Will they be included, both the Catholic and the Protestant churches, and most importantly, will they get the funding to make it possible for them to do their work in a free and fair way?

Ms. MUYANGWA. We engage with civil society. I cannot speak directly to what the breakdown is in terms of faith organizations' participation in that engagement. But we could definitely followup and provide you with that response.

Mr. SMITH. Chairman, I am hoping to lead a delegation there next year, because we have got to get this right. I mean, after that hearing—I knew what was going on in those mines, I raised it a number of times—but until I heard from two DR Congolese leaders, including a Jesuit priest, it just—how could this President be



complicit in this? And I believe he is, and I think that we have got to follow that up very aggressively, this abuse of children.

Ms. PHEE. Congressman, I just want to add, to inform you that I had the honor to meet with a delegation of religious leaders from Congo to talk about these very issues, and I want to reassure you that we here in Washington, as well as our mission in Kinshasa, are actively engaged and respect very much the leadership role they play and—

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. I am almost out of time. Just a couple of other questions, and I have many, but the strategy, again, did not include religious persecution, which is on the rise on the sub-continent.

Was Rashad Hussain, our, your, your designee, but he is the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, was he involved with that process? Because surely he would have wanted, I think, a major section of this to be devoted to religious freedom.

And, last—again, out of time—do you support—and do this in written form—a criminal tribunal for Liberia? I have had hearings in the past. We have had Allan White testify. Yes, there was one in Sierra Leone, but Liberia still has a number of people who committed genocide that have not been held to account.

Charles Taylor, of course, is at the Hague, you know, was convicted, but that was Sierra Leone's Tribunal.

There was a call in 2009 to establish a war crimes tribunal there. Will you support that?

Ms. PHEE. On the last issue, I would like to come back to you. I am not well versed on that issue, so if I could take that for the record, I will come back to you.

On the issue of religious freedom, again, I always want to thank you. It is so important that you raise this issue vocally. It really amplifies U.S. voice and impact.

We very much consider the law to be a guiding principle of how we conduct ourselves, the embassy and all of us here in Washington, including Ambassador Hussain. So I do not want you to think that because there is not a specific section, that it isn't embedded in every way in which we engage. I just want to affirm that for you.

Ms. MUYANGWA. I would just echo the assistant secretary's work that the issue of religious freedom is one that is reflected in the work that USAID does, and so we will continue to engage on that issue in all of our partnerships and work with our African partners.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative and the next mayor—or the mayor-elect from Los Angeles, California, Karen Bass, currently still the chair of the House Africa Subcommittee, for 5 minutes.

Ms. BASS. For as long as I can be. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, again, and thank you, Ambassador—

Chairman MEEKS. Unmute yourself.

Ms. BASS. Oh, I am. Can you hear me? Can you hear me? No?

Chairman MEEKS. We cannot hear you.

Ms. BASS. Oh, I am not muted. How about now?

Chairman MEEKS. Can we check that here? I cannot hear.

Ms. BASS. Yes, I am not muted. No?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I can hear her on Zoom.

Chairman MEEKS. Hold on 1 second.

Ms. BASS. OK.

How about now? Any luck?

Chairman MEEKS. As we deal with the technical difficulties, and I do not know whether it is just Representative Bass, but while we try to work to see—let me try and yield 5 minutes to Representative Bill Keating of Massachusetts, the chair of the Europe Subcommittee.

Is he on? Let's see if his audio works.

Mr. KEATING. I am here.

Ms. BASS. Hello? Can you guys hear me?

Mr. KEATING. I can hear.

Ms. BASS. You can hear me, Bill?

Mr. KEATING. I can hear you, yes.

Chairman MEEKS. We do not see Representative Keating. I am also just trying to check to see the depth of the technical problems.

Let me recognize Representative Dina Titus of Nevada for 5 minutes, if she is on.

Mr. KEATING. We are on.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Chairman, can you hear me? Can you hear me, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman MEEKS. So I am told that Webex is having issues for those that are on virtually. So while we fix those technical difficulties, I will yield 5 minutes to Representative Tom Malinowski from New Jersey, who is the vice chair of the full committee.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our witnesses.

I wanted to focus on Ethiopia as well. And I would start by saying, I think this agreement is a potentially huge step forward, and thank you to both of you and Ambassador Hammer and Secretary Blinken and everybody who has been working very hard to try to bring an end to the fighting and the killing and the suffering of the people of Ethiopia.

We already went over one of the potential weaknesses, and thank you for the very clear and definitive answers on Eritrea's role in the conflict. I wanted to ask as well about the humanitarian access challenges. Obviously, part of the agreement includes a commitment by the Government of Ethiopia to expedite humanitarian assistance and the restoration of services.

What we have seen thus far is still very, very limited though, as I am sure you would acknowledge, basically two trucks to Mekelle, which is nothing. And I wanted to start with just a broad question.

What do you think the problem is, why is the government still apparently holding up aid shipments, and what are we doing to overcome them?

Ms. PHEE. I think we are in a much better position than we were in the summer where aid—we worked very hard, as you know, to get aid rolling, but it only went through a far province. What the government is now willing to do and what we have already seen is trucks moving from Amhara Region. The roads are better, and that will open up multiple lines. So my expectation is that we will begin to see the kind of aid deliveries that we need.

Part of the challenge bureaucratically or logistically is that the international humanitarian agencies needed to do a security survey before they began moving. Those surveys should be completed within the next few days, and that will facilitate.

I also wanted to call your attention to an ICRC delivery of medical supplies, which is in addition to the truck movements. So I believe we are cautiously optimistic that we will see the results that need to happen.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. OK. Well, there is a comment by the lead government negotiator, Reda, who is saying—that struck me as concerning. He said, quote, “Once the government controls the airports, the navigation system, and the airspace fully, then we will allow aid to flow both on the ground and in the air.”

What is going on there? Does that strike you as an appropriate condition to place on the free flow of food and medicine?

Ms. PHEE. I also saw those comments. What is important is that the agreement—the elaboration of the agreement that was negotiated in Nairobi has no such reservations. And that is our expectation that they will—the government will comply with those—with that agreement.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. OK. And, finally, I want to ask you about an aspect of this that we do not talk about often enough, and that is the role that some of our leading American companies have played in creating this environment in Ethiopia and in many other countries around the world in which people who live together now hate each other with a passion that has, in this case, led to horrific acts of violence.

I am talking, obviously, about Facebook and Google that created these platforms, which they try to moderate in the United States but moderate far less in countries where people speak languages that Silicon Valley does not speak.

I am just wondering—I am sure you share my assessment on this—to what extent is the department, the Administration engaging with leadership of these companies to pressure them to dedicate the vastly greater resources that are needed to ensure that incitement of violence, incitement of genocide by armed actors and just by regular people in countries like Ethiopia is actually dealt with?

Ms. PHEE. I appreciate you raising this concern. I do not think I have a good answer. We have had episodic engagement with the leadership of those companies. We haven’t achieved the results we would like to see. I would observe that that in the more specific case of Ethiopia we have separately attempted to engage with the diaspora, which itself has played a role in accelerating this rhetoric, so sort of having diplomatic engagement to compensate for the deficiencies in the social media space.

I would also observe that I think this is a problem across the continent. We have a lot of fragile societies that coexist uneasily, and social media, as well Russian propaganda, for example, by the Wagner Group, can be very disruptive and divisive. And I do not know—it is a problem, frankly, in our own society as you know well, and I think it is an area where we can work together.

We are lucky to have Nate Fick now at the State Department who is looking at cyber and digital policy, and I think there is hope that we can try and do more in this space.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

My time is up.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I think we are trying to do a mike check on the virtual, so let's see what we have there.

STAFF. Mike check, five, four, three, two, one.

Chairman MEEKS. Can we do the mike check?

STAFF. Trying again. Five, four, three, two, one.

Chairman MEEKS. I can hear it very faintly, five, four, three, two, one, but we cannot hear you clearly or loudly.

STAFF. Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one.

Chairman MEEKS. I can now hear you.

So I would move forward to our next member, and that is Representative Scott Perry of Pennsylvania. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you very much.

I would like to start out by acknowledging the service of my colleague on the other side of the aisle from New Jersey, Mr. Malinowski. I have found him to be an engaged, informed, and thoughtful and worthy adversary. We haven't agreed on a lot, but he has been here to serve. And I just wanted to say that that should be acknowledged and appreciated.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much, seriously.

Mr. PERRY. Ladies, Director, Secretary, thanks for being here.

Would you acknowledge, both of you, that Congolese child labor in the cobalt mines is occurring? Is that something that we can agree on?

Ms. PHEE. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. Sounds like that is a yes.

Would you characterize—I do not know where you are on this, but would you characterize yourself as generally for colonialism or generally against colonialism? And I would describe it as the exploitation of one nation's resources by another nation's.

Ms. PHEE. I think I can speak for my colleague that we would both be opposed.

Thank you.

Mr. PERRY. OK. So it wouldn't be—Director, I think you mentioned disinformation. It wouldn't be disinformation to say that the Chinese are practicing colonialist activities in Africa, particularly in the Congo in the cobalt mines and in particular with the child labor practices that are occurring there? That wouldn't be disinformation, would it?

Ms. PHEE. No, sir.

Mr. PERRY. No, I did not think so.

Would you also acknowledge that there is slave labor incorporated—and I know this is out of your sphere of direct work, but in East Turkestan, Xinjiang Province in China—regarding the construction of batteries and related items to electric vehicles and electronics and essentially the net zero agenda, slave labor?

Ms. PHEE. As you mentioned, I wouldn't feel comfortable speaking outside of Africa. I do not have the data or the knowledge.

Mr. PERRY. Director?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Nor do I.

Mr. PERRY. OK. So neither one of you have ever heard about these claims or are unaware? Are you aware and just not sure or—

Ms. PHEE. Obviously, sir, we are aware as hopefully informed foreign affairs professionals.

Mr. PERRY. I just wanted to get that from you.

Ms. PHEE. Thank you.

Mr. PERRY. So what autonomy do you believe that Africa should have in deciding how it produces and distributes energy? And where does the United States tax dollar play a factor in that? What autonomy should African nations have in choosing?

Ms. PHEE. As the central tenet of the strategy is to treat Africans as partners, we believe they should have autonomy and that they do have autonomy.

Of course, as the United States seeking to advance our interests, we will use all of the tools available to us to promote our views and interests in our engagement with African nations.

Mr. PERRY. So do you think that the United States should promote its views on religion on the people of Africa?

Ms. PHEE. It is U.S. law, sir, for us to promote religious freedom.

Mr. PERRY. OK. But what about religious dogma? I understand religious freedom, and we can get into a long discussion about promoting religious freedom as it is juxtaposed to what actually happens in the law. But, generally speaking, do you think that the United States should promote the—the U.S. Government, through United States tax dollars, should promote the belief in Christianity, so to speak, or Judaism, or anything else?

Ms. PHEE. Congressman, my conduct and the conduct of our team is guided by our Constitution and by our law.

Mr. PERRY. What does that mean? Do you believe in the promotion of that or not?

Ms. PHEE. I believe in the promotion of religious freedom but not as to any particular dogma.

Mr. PERRY. OK. Yes, not in any particular dogma, which I would agree with you.

So why then do you think it is appropriate for the United States to impose on Africa the zero carbon or the net zero agenda on a population that is striving and struggling to get out of poverty knowing, knowing, that it is also the imposition of Chinese colonialism, tied to child labor, slave labor, at a minimum, and also at an increased cost to some of the people—to people who can least afford it on the planet? Why is that appropriate?

Ms. PHEE. The verb “impose” is perhaps not an accurate reflection of policy. I understand our policy to be to encourage zero carbon results, but to also recognize the challenges that Africa is facing right now, just as you have identified, and to support adaptation and to support transition.

So I think we recognize the complexity of the situation, and we also recognize that the Russian war in Ukraine has created additional complications on the global energy agenda, and we need to work through those complications.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman’s time has expired.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative Dina Titus from Nevada for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to followup on some of the points that were made earlier about the Ethiopian conflict and ask this to Assistant Secretary Phee.

Now that the conflict has ended—and we hope that continues—I wonder what actions the Administration has taken to support unfettered access to the Tigray Region so that they can conduct, oh, investigations into potential war crimes, human rights violations, crimes against humanity? We have heard that access has been hindered from a number of different sources. I wonder if you could enlighten us more on that.

Ms. PHEE. Representative Titus, thank you for raising that important issue.

In conversations that the Secretary, Ambassador Hammer, and I have had with Ethiopian government and TPLF representatives about resolving this conflict, we have raised the importance of addressing accountability, the grave human rights violations that have occurred during this conflict, and the importance of having independent monitors, chiefly those from the United Nations, be able to enter Tigray and other areas of Ethiopia where we understand abuses have taken place.

So I want to reassure you that in recent days, in every conversation we have had about addressing this conflict, we have explained the importance to the United States of significant action to address the human rights violations that took place.

Ms. TITUS. Well, good. I am glad to hear that, and I know some of my constituents who have been very concerned about that will also. Maybe you could keep us kind of posted on some of the findings that you all have as you pursue this.

Now I would like to ask the director, we are talking about Prosper Africa and how that is going to be a key player as we enhance our economic relations between the U.S. and Africa. I wonder if you could explain how Prosper Africa is working to connect building on public-private relationships in order to provide more opportunities for women-owned businesses or micro industries.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you for that question, Congresswoman.

So Prosper Africa, through a number of initiatives focuses on women, there is an actual standalone on an initiative that we have that focuses on women businesses and trying to encourage them in the trade sphere. So we will continue to push on that end, to expand that program, and have it take hold both within Prosper Africa itself but also in our support for AGOA and African continental free trade area work that we are doing.

Ms. TITUS. How do you get the word out that this is available for people to take advantage of or to use to startup businesses for women or promote their products so that we become a better market for those companies in Africa?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Prosper Africa has actually established a digital platform—its name escapes me now—where businesses on both ends can tap into this digital platform to get all of the information that they need about doing business with each other. And we have

seen tremendous access to that platform trying to find out what the opportunities are, trying to find out how the U.S. Government can support those who would like to engage in Africa.

I can definitely followup on that and get you the information that you need.

Ms. TITUS. Well, thank you.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentlewoman yields back.

I now recognize Representative Darrell Issa of California for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to continue on on the Prosper Africa initiative.

You know, Secretary Pompeo put a lot of time and effort into getting it started, but today now, 2 additional years past the changing of the Administration, one of my questions is what can you point to as specifics of accomplishment? In other words, usually there is at least anecdotal stories, and I haven't heard any of them today.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you for that question, Representative Issa.

Let me just go to some of the accomplishments that we have had in the Prosper Africa, if you will just give me a second. Sorry.

Mr. ISSA. While you are doing that, I am going to ask a followup question, realizing we are dealing primarily with Africa. Is this, in fact, a program that is equally portable and should be equally distributed throughout similar countries beyond Sub-Saharan Africa?

Maybe that is a good question while we are waiting for specific accomplishments.

Ms. MUYANGWA. So let me just very quickly speak to some of the accomplishments.

Since its establishment, we have mobilized \$1.5 billion of investment in climate health and sustainable infrastructure and also established teams of investment advisors at both USAID and DFC who work with embassy drill teams to advance trade and investment transactions.

We are working with dedicated Prosper Africa funding to mobilize exports into the trade space by expanding our resourcing operations. And so for every \$1 of U.S. Government funding, we are leveraging at least \$15 in private sector investment.

We recently took a group of U.S. pension funds from Chicago, Hartford, and Philadelphia to Africa to break down the perceptions of risks; therefore, bridging this perception of the risk in Africa being too high. Often what we find is that when people actually get on the ground, they get to see that that risk perception is not uniform across the continent and that there are areas where they could actually invest.

And as a result, they invested \$85 million in a Pan African fund along with a South African pension fund, and this is going to provide financing to entrepreneurs and small businesses across West Africa.

So those are just some of the accomplishments that we have had that we are looking to build on.

Mr. ISSA. So the \$85 million fund has not been distributed yet, but it is in process? Is that your statement?

Ms. MUYANGWA. I understand, sir, but I can confirm that and get back to your office.

Mr. ISSA. OK. And I appreciate your answer, and I know you were attempting to be fully responsive. What I was looking for were those examples where an implementation has led to a change in a community or individual entrepreneurs, and so on.

What I heard is what we usually have—do in government. We talk about how many people we employed and how much money we spent. So if you do not mind, for the record, if you would follow up with examples of implementation that have led to economic differences; in other words, the effect of the money we spent rather than the effort we made to spend it and to educate.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to use my remaining time to just make a comment.

I know this is an important hearing. And with my colleague and longtime friend, Karen Bass, moving on to another large job in her career, I wanted to take a moment to thank her for the hard work and the many years that she has been a leader on this committee. I know she'll be missed by all of us, on both sides of the aisle. So, you know, we often get—we often talk about what we do not agree on, and I could certainly bring up a few here today. But it would be inappropriate when, in fact, Karen, you have worked so hard on what we do agree on. And I want to thank you for your service.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back my last 12 seconds.

Mr. MALINOWSKI [presiding]. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Castro for 5 minutes.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Chairman.

And also thank you, Karen, for all your work on the African Subcommittee over the years, incredible work.

I will jump right in. In 1 month the United States is hosting the U.S. Africa Leaders Summit here in Washington. This, of course, is an important opportunity to demonstrate U.S. leadership in the region. But I believe there should be more visibility on what we hope to substantively accomplish at this summit.

And so my question for Assistant Secretary Phee is what concrete deliverables can we expect from this summit?

Ms. PHEE. Thank you very much for the question.

I view this summit as an opportunity to consolidate the great work that is already underway. You know, thanks to Congress, we have doubled our normal food security investment of about \$400 million to about \$800 million this year to help Africans deal with the consequences of the war in Ukraine.

Likewise, under the President and the Secretary's leadership, we have also massively increased our investment in health to help Africans not only deal with the COVID pandemic and the economic impact but to help develop health security to deal with the next pandemic that is coming. And you see a lot of news coming out of Sharm El Sheikh where we have increased our engagement to help with managing climate change.

So a lot of what we will be doing in the summit is sort of consolidating what great work and partnership is already underway, having a conversation about what else is needed, and using the summit to catapult the relationship forward.



I expect there to be serious discussion about increasing the African role in the multilateral system, whether the G20, the Security Council, or reforms to multilateral banking institutions so that they have the financing and investment that we have talked about.

And it will be important for leaders to meet not only President Biden but the rest of the Cabinet.

And I mentioned earlier the Africa Business Forum, as well as related side events, where we are really making an effort to expose African leaders to American companies.

So those are the types of activities that we expect to come out of the summit.

Mr. CASTRO. Wonderful. Well, thank you so much for your great work.

And, you know, Congress has played a leading role in deepening our engagement with Africa such as through the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Electrify Africa Act of 2015. What legislative efforts will support the anticipated summit outcomes?

And then also if I heard that African countries have not received their formal invitations to the summit, what is the timeline for sending those invitations or getting them out?

Ms. PHEE. The latter question first, I think that is an erroneous report. We have formally invited the delegations, and we are looking forward to receiving confirmation this week of who is coming. They also have received a draft program with speaking roles, and we are engaged with both our embassies in Africa and here in Washington with the diplomatic corps.

Ambassador Tai will be hosting a meeting of her counterparts to discuss the future of AGOA. It is my belief that there is a win-win scenario for us with AGOA and for Africans through the continental free trade area, and I am hopeful that in that discussion we can talk about how we can help both populations do better with trade and investment and jobs.

So those are some of the types of activities that will also be part of this multiday extravaganza.

Mr. CASTRO. Great. Well, you know, I am glad that the formal invitations have been extended and that you are going to hear back soon on who is attending because I have seen and others have seen these summits coming together at the last minute and we end up not getting out of the summit everything that we potentially could. So I am very glad that the State Department is on top of it.

It is also good to see including African companies in multilateral forums. I have been disappointed they have not been as vested at the U.N. on Ukraine issues, for instance. And we have to be more inclusive. We should be more inclusive of the people of Africa, the people of Latin America, and places in the world that the U.S. Congress, for example, does not often pay as much attention to as Europe or other places.

So thank you for all of your work, and I look forward to being helpful, you know, in helping to deliver legislatively whatever we agree to at the summit.

I yield back.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Burchett of Tennessee for 5 minutes,

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciative your friendship. You are an excellent legislator and an excellent receiver I will say on the congressional football team.

Ms. Phee, could you talk to me a little bit about China's growing influence in Africa and how, in fact, that is undermining our relationship across the continent? I am always concerned about the Belt and Road Initiative and the way that they just mistreat folks. And I am wondering if you could elaborate on some of that please, ma'am.

Ms. PHEE. Thank you for the question.

It is a challenge that we are alert to and trying to address. Even though are some areas where we can cooperate with China, particularly in the environment, but there are many more areas where we need to compete and in some instances contest. We have a different model than the Chinese, as you know. We invest in human capital and development and in systems and in institutions. Sometimes some of that investment is less obviously visible. The Chinese tend to do bright and shiny objects. Some of the investment in infrastructure has been helpful. Other practices have resulted in substandard infrastructure and substandard labor practices.

So we are working to develop alternatives for our African partners so that they are able to choose U.S. engagement, and we are also working with the G7 and the EU to expand the opportunities for Africans to move away from the Chinese model.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you.

I would hope at some point we would look into creating entrepreneurs in Africa, not just creating sweatshops. And I kind of weird out on bamboo all the time. I make bamboo skateboards at home. It is cheaper than a psychiatrist, so it kind of gets my mind off things. But I notice in some areas they use what is called iron bamboo and make bicycles, and then they export them to America and they sell them for thousands of dollars, things like that. I would hope we would kind of look outside of the—you know, they are not going to create a computer out in middle of the desert somewhere. But, dadgummit, they could do some things I think that would help, and I would hope that we would look to some of those.

I have an another question, though. You brought up environment. It is not in my notes, but I've been studying this for quite some time, is the reclaiming of some of these deserts that are really just ravaging these countries due to they do not have education. They do not have fuel. They have to burn the trees. There is not anything left, nothing to hold the top soil down. The U.N. a few years ago listed not—they listed several things that were of great concern. Their No. 1 concern at one time to humanity was the depletion of top soil, oddly enough.

And I am wondering, are you all doing anything to work with them? I know the Chinese are, and that scares the daylights out of me because the Chinese aren't doing it because they love the people of Africa. They want to control more and get more rare metals.

I wonder, are you all doing anything in that realm of reclaiming deserts in some of those really deprived areas?

Ms. PHEE. That is such an important issue, but it is very specific. So I would like to look into the blizzard of environmental project finance that has just been announced as part of Sharm El Sheikh and come back to you. I would offer that both important issues you have highlighted, entrepreneur and helping Africans deal with the terrible impacts of climate change, I think are united, and we are trying to see how we can support entrepreneurs in this space. But if it is OK, I will come back to you on the specific issue of the soil in the Sahara.

Mr. BURCHETT. I wish you really would. I do not—do not just check a box. Unless the Lord or somebody else takes me out, I am going to be here for 2 more years, so I would expect to hear from you all hopefully in the new year.

Ma'am, did you want to add to that, please?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Sure. We at USAID have some work going on in that area, particularly in the Sahara. I am not sure as to the scale and scope, but I would say that given developments in that region it is probably work that we would appreciate some advocacy in terms of scaling up that work.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. And I would also—I like USAID. Sometimes I do not like some of the stuff USAID does. I think you all have a PR problem. And with just like the desert changing sands, there are changing sands in Washington. And if you all could work some on your PR and letting us know exactly the good things you all are doing, I would really appreciate that, ma'am, because I would like to be in your corner on a lot of issues.

Thank you all.

And I yield back the remainder of my 2 seconds, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

And I have been wondering whether dadgummit is an allowable word in the Foreign Affairs—

Mr. BURCHETT. Dadgummit, D-a-d-g-u-m-m-i-t.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. I am going to allow it.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. It is just a thought that I had.

Mr. BURCHETT. If you did not, it would knock out about half of my vocabulary.

Thank you, Brother.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. And with that, we are going to recess the committee for just a short period of time so that we can observe interesting events on the floor of the House and hopefully come back as soon as possible.

So if I could ask the witnesses to hang out for a bit, that would be great.

Thank you so much.

[Recess.]

[1 p.m.]

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Let's call the committee back in session.

And we will begin or resume with Representative Sara Jacobs of California for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you so much to our witnesses. And I will echo the comments of my colleagues. We are going to miss the leadership of Congresswoman Bass. And I

know that Los Angeles is very lucky, and I am very lucky that we are only 2 hours away in San Diego.

So my first question is for you, Assistant Secretary Phee. I was so glad to see in the Administration's Africa strategy a recognition that our counterterrorism approach over the past 3 decades has come up short and that there are strong linkages between exclusionary governance, human rights abuses, and corruption with insecurity.

Just the other day Assistant Administrator Jenkins from USAID CPS Bureau noted that 71 percent of violent extremists escalated to violence because they or a close family member experienced violence personally from the State.

So my question is how will this acknowledgment of the needs to change our counterterrorism approach actually change our approach? In other words, as the lead on U.S. diplomacy in Africa, how will you use your position to incentivize needed reform and governance in human rights so that governments hear this signal loud and clear that our priority is actually those things and not if they just help us a little a long time on counterterrorism, we will turn a blind eye on everything else?

Ms. PHEE. Thank you very much for your leadership on this issue and for your focus on the linkages between good governance and bad security.

I think we all agree, for example, what we are seeing in the Sahel is problems in governance that lead to vulnerabilities that the terrorists exploit.

We have two big tools at our disposal. One is our voice, how we engage with leaders. And I want to reassure you that we are emphasizing the importance of these issues in our discussions with governments, as well as other aspects of a society, to help increase their understanding that it is a priority for our funding and our engagement.

We are also looking at our resourcing, and the Global Fragility Act I think will be the best tool that is available to us.

And we are also—a third leg, which I would like to take the time to brief you on later if I can, is that we have done a lot of review and research of programs, particularly the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, what worked, what hasn't so that we can guide our interventions in the future.

And, last, I would say one of the exciting aspects to me of the GFA is the focus on metrics and constant evaluation so that we hold ourselves accountable to doing better and changing the way we do things.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. And I will look forward to that briefing.

On the same topic I think nowhere is more clear that our military first approach has failed than Somalia, and while there have been recent tactical gains in central and southern Somalia against Al-Shabaab, the absence of effective governance has prevented long-term progress, deep divisions among Federal leaders, et cetera.

So given that reconciliation among these entities is vital to moving forward, what concrete actions is the Biden Administration taking to support efforts on reconciliation which the president, President Hassan Sheikh, has identified as a priority? And does the

State Department have a plan to help the Federal Government of Somalia seek reconciliation through a long-term effort?

Ms. PHEE. Absolutely. We are working in support of the president's leadership for the Federal Government to engage in a sustained and systemic growth with the member States so that they can achieve the kind of political reforms you have identified.

You will recall that Under Secretary Nuland traveled to Somalia this summer. President Hassan Sheikh came to Washington in September and met, among others, with Secretary Blinken, and a key message in those engagements is the need for him to sustain and expand that political reconciliation.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you.

Assistant Administrator Muyangwa, my next question is for you.

I was pleased by Administrator Power's prioritization of locally led development at USAID. I think it is particularly relevant for Africa where the international communities' approach has historically not been locally led. Unfortunately, most development in Africa has too often been led by U.S.-based contract developers.

So I wanted to ask about the recently announced Africa Localization Initiative to direct more funding to local organizations. Can you speak to any details about the planned implementation of this announcement and how we can work together to ensure its success?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you very much for that question.

We agree fully with you about the importance of localization to sustainable development, particularly on the continent. Fortunately, we do have a solid foundation on which to build on with our localization efforts since a number of previous Administrations of USAID have focused on that. So we are continuing to build on that foundation.

Right now the Africa Bureau is designing an African Localization Initiative to fit within the border of USAID localization effort. And we are looking at a handful of countries where we are going to look at how we can enhance our localization efforts there and then come back and scale up our two other missions.

And we anticipate that we will be able to announce additional details about this initiative before the end of the year. So we will be happy to reengage at that point.

Ms. JACOBS. I will look forward to those details.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Tenney of New York for 5 minutes.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I just want to say thank you to the witnesses.

And my first question is going to be for Assistant Secretary Phee.

On October 18, the State Department publicly acknowledged that Iran transferred Mohajer-6 unmanned aerial vehicles to Ethiopia last summer. This is a direct violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231. I wanted to know if you could tell me if the Administration has used access or the authorities provided under its Executive Order 13949 in Iran—relating to Iran or related entities or people for its role in providing these drones to Ethiopia which permits the broad application of sanctions against individuals who

have engaged or attempted to engage in manufacture, acquisition, possession, development, transport, transfer, or use of any of these military items to and from Iran.

Has the Administration used these authorities against these entities or people for all of those above—any of those all or above reasons in their role in procuring those drones from Iran?

Ms. PHEE. Thank you for highlighting that troublesome action.

My understanding is that we have taken direct action, sanctions. I would want to check on the particular authorities that were used and get back to you.

Ms. TENNEY. So you believe there has been some sanctions done?

Ms. PHEE. Yes.

Ms. TENNEY. Can we—I just want to be sure for the record we can get those under the chairman's rule.

Ms. PHEE. Yes.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you.

And so let me just followup with this. We have been very clear about the fact that these drones are—or these Mohajer drones to Russia—in violation of U.N. Security Council 2231. Is there reason why we haven't taken a similar public stance against actions by Ethiopia which presumably are also a violation under the U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231?

Ms. PHEE. To ensure that I am perfectly correct, I would like to followup on that question.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. Thank you.

So I would just ask, are we—does not limiting our criticism of the Iranian Mohajer transfer to Europe in context undermine the legitimacy of our position when it comes to these UAVs and under the U.N. Resolution 2231 were inconsistent in dealing with these two different entities?

Ms. PHEE. We have spoken repeatedly and directly about the danger and acceleration of the conflict that has been caused by external parties providing weapons. So it has been part of our public diplomacy, and I will followup on the specifics.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you.

What kind of sanctions really do you envision would happen? Under the Biden Administration, what are we going to be doing? What do you think would be appropriate in this situation here?

Ms. PHEE. With regard to actions by Iran?

Ms. TENNEY. Taking action on the transfer of these unmanned aerial vehicles of this nature from Iran to Ethiopia and also in the case of Russia.

Ms. PHEE. I do not mean to dodge the question, but I would prefer to consult with our authorities on the sanctions. I think they would have the best answer for that, and I will followup.

Ms. TENNEY. Are you aware of any of this happening, though, of these actually happening, or you are just not sure of the exact nature of them happening?

Ms. PHEE. Their reaction or the conduct?

Ms. TENNEY. The conduct.

Ms. PHEE. No, absolutely we are aware of the conduct.

Ms. TENNEY. Is it that you do not have the specifics on what the sanctions would be, or you know the conduct occurred; you just do

not know what the Administration has done? Is that what you are explaining?

Ms. PHEE. It is the authorities I'm not sure which were used so that I would prefer to be accurate in my response.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. But the authorities—they have done something. Sanctions have been implicated. You just do not know the exact nature of them?

Ms. PHEE. I would like to take that back and confirm that I am giving you the best answer.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. So basically you do not—you are not sure if any sanctions have been taken?

Ms. PHEE. I know that there have been sanctions taken against Iranian actions with regard to transfers, weapons transfers, but I do not know the specifics.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. But you know that it was done?

Ms. PHEE. I really am not in a good position to answer. I need to come back to you.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. I guess my question, so you did confirm? You know that the transfers were done. Sanctions were initiated using the authorities. We just need to get the specifics on that. Can I just clarify that?

Ms. PHEE. I really am not confident in the arrangement, so I will come back to you, if that is OK.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. Can we get that within the 5 days as required by the—

Ms. PHEE. Absolutely.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

I yield back.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Allred of Texas for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLRED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I am glad to see our witnesses here. I will say this. At the encouragement of Chairman Meeks, I was lucky enough to be part of the Presidential delegation to the inauguration of the new Kenyan president with our two distinguished guests this afternoon. And, you know, it was inspiring to see a country that had experienced difficult and violent transitions or lack thereof or challenges to election results have and go through an election in which the results were accepted.

We met people who I think we can all agree proudly understood what happened in the election. They allowed transparency around it. They had, I think, an inspiring inauguration in which their handing over of the instruments of power are very literal.

And I think it was also important that there were a lot of other African leaders there who could learn from Kenya's example. And, you know, obviously as an American and someone who was into voting rights before I came to Congress, I found that to be inspiring, but also even an example for us given that we did not have a peaceful transfer of power for the first time in our history after our last Presidential election.

And, you know, Africa, as you have said in your testimonies, is a continent of opportunity, of young folks, of entrepreneurs, of, you know, women taking on enormous leadership roles, of emerging

countries that we need to support and encourage the positive trends and help them combat some of the things that are challenging them.

And so, you know, Dr. Muyangwa, I will say, Ms. Phee, what do you see Kenya's role in terms of being the anchor of our regional strategy? What impact do you think we have already seen from the change in Administration there? And how has that impacted the Biden Administration's approach here in terms of your Sub-Saharan Africa overall strategy?

Ms. PHEE. Thanks, Congressman.

And let me say it was terrific to have you on that trip for many reasons but including to demonstrate congressional interest in and support for Africa.

President Ruto, as you recall in his inaugural speech, asked President Kenyatta whom he succeeded to take on regional leadership roles, which he has done very effectively. He played a critical role in helping the Ethiopians reach a cessation of hostilities and begin to take additional steps that are required to resolve that conflict. He has also been actively involved in the eastern DRC, trying to stop the conflict that is disrupting so many lives there. And they are working together well. President Ruto, himself, when he was in Sharm El Sheikh, hosted a meeting of leaders to try and address the conflict in eastern DRC. So we see good coordination between the incumbent and his predecessor.

And we continue to work closely with Kenya in the fight against Al-Shabaab, and we are also working—and I will let Dr. Monde speak about this more—to help Kenya and other countries in the Horn deal with this historic 4-year drought.

Ambassador Whitman is mobilizing U.S. trade and investment, trying to help the Kenyan economy continue to flourish, and we are working very closely on food security matters because Kenya, like many African countries, is suffering from the consequences of the Russian war.

So all in all, we have a robust, productive partnership, and we are immensely appreciative of Kenya's leadership in the region.

Thank you.

Mr. ALLRED. Dr. Monde, anything to add?

Ms. MUYANGWA. No. Thank you very much.

It was a pleasure to travel with you to Kenya, and just echoing the assistant secretary's words about how important your presence there was to show support for the Kenyan people as they made this very, very important transition.

So we are working with Kenya in a number of ways to add on to what the assistant secretary said. Part of it is continuing to work with Kenya on strengthening governance, strengthening devolution, strengthening citizen participation in the economy. We are working—and governance. Working with Kenya on food security issues. We know there is a looming drought in the Horn of Africa, and Kenya has about 4.5 million people who are under threat for severe food insecurity in 2023 if the long rains do not come.

So we are working with Kenya on a number of fronts, and they will continue to be an important partner for us.

Mr. ALLRED. Well, thank you both for your services. My pleasure to travel with you, and it was an honor to be there on behalf of



the United States, and it was an inspiring trip. And I am glad that our cooperation is continuing.

And I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Mast of Florida for 5 minutes.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Chairman.

Ms. Phee, everybody, thank you for your testimoneys today. Appreciate that.

I want to speak to you a little bit about our funding, United Nations, if we are getting our money's worth, how you see leveraging the support that we give to Africa. As a whole, I want to say it is between 25 and 30 percent of the United Nation's delegation is made up of African countries. We provide somewhere \$8 billion plus a year to African nations. Do you think that we are leveraging that appropriately in terms of getting them to support United States' priorities within the United Nations, or where do you think that is lacking?

Ms. PHEE. As in all things, the record is a bit mixed. Generally speaking, in the Security Council, the current African members have voted in support of the United States. You know, there are many ways in which we engage in the United Nation's system. African leaders overwhelmingly supported the U.S. candidate for that obscure U.N. agency, the International Telecommunications Union, which will have an outside impact on internet governance globally. So that was a very positive outcome.

We work very hard to have African support in the U.N. Human Rights Council. And, in fact, African support was critical to getting a commission for the atrocities that have taken place in Ethiopia during the recent conflicts.

We do not always succeed in getting the high numbers that we would like in terms of our policy goals, whether they particularly regard to Russia or China. However, on many of the resolutions related to Ukraine, Africans provided majority support.

So we also, as you know, contribute very much to Africa through the international humanitarian organizations, such as the World Health Organization, the FAO, WFP. And we are also a big supporter for peacekeeping missions on the continent.

So we are engaged both externally providing support to the U.N. system to Africa and encouraging the African voice to support U.S. priorities at different voting bodies in the system.

Mr. MAST. Where would you put the total number of USAID to Africa at when you add up all of those items?

Ms. PHEE. I would have to come back to that to make sure that I give you a reasonable range, but it is significant if that is your point. If you consider, for example, as you said, that we give about 28 percent in support of each peacekeeping mission as well as each political mission in Africa, our contribution is significant.

Mr. MAST. Where do you think that has paid off the most? And where do you think—I will let you cough on a minute. Take a drink if you need.

Where do you think that is paying off the most, where we are getting our money's worth? And where do you think they are lag-

ging behind? Who do you think is in jeopardy of saying, yes, we do not think you are a good use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to support?

Ms. PHEE. I do not view it in strictly transactional terms. I think it is an art—

Mr. MAST. Why not.

Ms. PHEE. Because I believe the United States' role as a leader and as a model is more complex, and I find it is often effective if we work in partnership. So there are some instances where being transactional is appropriate, but not in all instances.

Mr. MAST. OK. Who would you say is not pulling their weight?

Ms. PHEE. You mean in Africa?

Mr. MAST. Yes.

Ms. PHEE. I would say Eritrea is a good example. Eritrea votes universally with Russia.

Mr. MAST. That you would like us to, you know, look at in a more pinpointed way as members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, what would be helpful that we looked at in a more pinpointed way with Eritrea?

Ms. PHEE. With regard to the U.N. system?

Mr. MAST. Correct.

Ms. PHEE. I think we are collectively facing a challenge in certain peacekeeping missions in Africa. I would site the Central African Republic and Mali are good examples where the Wagner Group is present. So you have a member of the P5 actively undermining a Security Council authorized peacekeeping mission.

The President, as you saw in September, highlighted the importance of revitalizing the U.N. charter principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty. The actions of the Wagner Group undermine those and other principles. So that is a challenge we are facing collectively.

Mr. MAST. Let me ask you very quickly. Because the idea of transactional is very important, and while I have a few more seconds just to ask you, where do you think Russia and China are doing it successfully? Where do they have an advantage with some of those nations that they are getting a better transaction than the United States of America?

Ms. PHEE. I do not think they universally succeed. They certainly try, and they do not succeed in part because they present on long-term transactional terms.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, ma'am. Appreciate it.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much.

And I would just maybe add briefly that, remember, the aid that we provide is mostly for people, not for governments. And so to the extent we are going to be transactional, it would be the aid to the governments, not the vast majority of the aid that USAID provides, which is to help save lives.

I will now recognize Representative Meuser of Pennsylvania for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEUSER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much to our witnesses, Secretary, Director.

So economic growth and maximizing of a country's natural resources usually leads to improved economies and quality of life. 13 percent of the world's natural gas is in the continent of Africa; 7 percent of the oil reserves, with Nigeria being the largest of all. Af-

rica, for instance, has 620 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Marcellus Shale, which is primarily in Pennsylvania, has 410, so quite a bit less, almost 50 percent less. 43 percent of the—meanwhile, 43 percent of the African population lacks access to electricity, and most of that, nearly—most of that is in the Sub-Saharan Africa which we are discussing.

So now at the same time African nations argue that they need investment to develop their energy resources, and they very often strongly mention oil and natural gas. Senegal president, almost a year ago, Macky Sall, stated plans by some countries to end the financing of natural gas exploration will prove a fatal blow to several emerging African economies.

Recently African Development Bank president Adesina stated that Africa must have natural gas to complement its renewable energies.

Just a few days ago I had a conversation in a hearing with one of the heads of the Development Finance Corporation, DFC, and they were very strongly stating how their investments were for all of the above, and they meant that very technically, not interested really in natural gas and oil.

So there is some real problems here because—and then you have John Kerry who recently stated he is willing to admit that natural gas is an acceptable transitory transitional energy which, OK, transitions, but there is timeframes on transitions. My timeframe is a lot longer than John Kerry's. They are looking at a 7-year transition, as you well know, to 2030. That requires the heavy hand of government, not so much the innovation of the private sector. And the heavy hand of government, let's face it, very rarely works throughout history.

So, you know, I do realize this is why the Administration refuses to issue 97 percent of the infrastructure permits here in the United States, but it is a losing plan because, A, it's very harmful to those people who make up the African nations, but it is also losing plan because the EU and China are, in fact, making these investments. And in the meanwhile, African nations are turning to coal in mass quantities because of our ideological narrowness and sense of urgency on all of the above and not considering any of the below.

So, you know, from the USAID standpoint, how are you looking at this? And, Director, you were mentioning earlier about energies and how important that is. So if you wouldn't mind commenting on what I just stated, Director, please.

Ms. MUYANGWA. No. Thank you so much for that question, Representative Meuser.

So from a USAID perspective, what we do is take a country-by-country, project-by-project approach when we are evaluating energy projects. So we look at whether—how we move forward to advance global and national climate goals. But at the same time within our systems, we work to ensure that while we are taking back renewable energy first approach, that we also are able to consider carbon intensive projects where the less carbon intensive ones would not make sense for development goals.

I do not know if that speaks directly to your question. So we do have the ability to assess on a country by country. It is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Mr. MEUSER. I appreciate that.

Do you know that the Belt and Road, the China investments, are overtaking our investments in the—particularly when it comes to natural gas in African nations? Is that something, Secretary or Director, you can comment on? And I am just about out of time.

Maybe you can get back to me. I would appreciate that.

And, please, this is very important, so I hope we can have more of an open mind, as well as a more logical approach to energy resources.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

The chair now recognizes Representative Omar of Minnesota for 5 minutes.

Ms. OMAR. Thank you, Chair.

Assistant Secretary Phee, it is good to see you again. I wanted to talk to you a little bit about Ethiopia.

How confident are you that the recent agreement is going to hold? If you can talk a little bit about Eritrea's role. We notice that the peace deal does not mention them. And what do you think the assessment is in obtaining that peace or sustaining that peace?

Ms. PHEE. Hi. Thank you.

I think identifying Eritrea as the weakness of the challenge in front of us is absolutely correct. The agreement refers to foreign forces, and last week in Nairobi where there was further elaboration of the mechanisms of implementing the agreed cessation of hostilities withdrawal of foreign forces and restoration of humanitarian assistance and services, there were—the modalities were beginning to be discussed. The AU is also charged with setting up a border monitoring mechanism that would also facilitate the withdrawal and the monitoring of the withdrawal of Eritrean troops.

I am confident that the people of Ethiopia, all of the people, all of the different communities do not want this destruction and death that they have been suffering from for more than 2 years. And I am hopeful that with the support of the African Union, Kenya, South Africa, and the leaders of the government, and the TPLF who have made courageous decisions to move forward on the negotiated path, with support from the United States and other members of the international community, that we can be successful in that and implementing the agreement.

Ms. OMAR. And how do you see the United States' role in justice and accountability?

Ms. PHEE. As you know, it is most important to come from the people themselves. They have told us that they are interested in pursuing accountability. The Minister of Justice from the Government of Ethiopia has briefed the diplomatic corps that that is something the government intends to pursue.

In the conversations that the Secretary has had, that Ambassador Hammer has had, that I have had, with the parties, we have made clear, in order to restore the full partnership that we previously enjoyed with Ethiopia, we would need to see action on accountability, not only because of our values but because Ethiopia won't be able to progress if they do not resolve the deep divisions that have been created by these acts.

Ms. OMAR. And if you can go back a little bit to Eritrea. I previously talked to you about the possibility of Somali troops being trained there. I know when we previously spoke, you said you couldn't confirm. It has now been confirmed that there are 5,000 Somali soldiers that have been trained. The President of Somalia says he does not have the resources to bring them back.

Is there a role for the United States to assist? I know that the ask was made.

Ms. PHEE. That subject is under discussion and also discussion with other regional and international partners, such as the Emiratis and the Qataris and the Turks, who you know are also engaged in providing security assistance to Somalia.

I think one question that we do not know the answer to is were any of those troops involved in the recent conflict, which would, of course, not be an encouraging sign for their engagement in Somalia. So that remains an open question that we need to resolve before we would move forward.

Ms. OMAR. Is there an assessment being done on whether they participated in any of the atrocities that you speak of?

Ms. PHEE. There are efforts underway to determine that, but as you know, we have very limited visibility or opportunity to understand exactly what is happening in Eritrea.

Ms. OMAR. Assistant Administrator Muyangwa, I wanted to talk to you a little bit about the famine in Somalia. As you know, there is looming famine taking place in Somalia at the moment.

How much money is still needed at the international level in order to prevent famine in Somalia in 2023?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you very much for that question. Based on our assessment and the international community's assessment that money to Ethiopia for humanitarian assistance in that space will run out in early 2023. I think it is May, April—

Ms. OMAR. You mean Somalia?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Somalia, sorry.

Ms. OMAR. OK.

Ms. MUYANGWA. It is early April or May 2023. And so there is absolutely a need to marshal the international community as well as other partners.

Ms. OMAR. Is the Administration making a specific ask as we do our last budget?

Ms. MUYANGWA. I am not sure what the numbers are, but we can check on that and provide that figure to you. But I believe there has been an ask, but I would have to confirm that.

Ms. OMAR. Oh, wonderful. I know I am out of time, but I would love to know what that number is so that we can push it here in Congress as well. Thank you both.

I yield back.

Mr. MALINOWSKI [presiding]. Thank you so much.

We are just about at the end. We are going to do two more members, just so you can calibrate, beginning with Representative Meijer of Michigan for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEIJER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses. And, Assistant Secretary McPhee, it is good to—Phee, not McPhee—I want to—yes, it is wonderful to see you again.

You were starting to mention the Wagner Group earlier, and I think for some Americans, the recent sledgehammer execution video of a former Wagner Group mercenary in Ukraine by his colleagues who accused him of betraying them was a stark reminder of some of the violence this group has perpetrated, you know, in Ukraine since 2014, and most, you know, dramatically since the February invasion, but also throughout Africa that I think slides a little bit more under the radar.

And with that sledgehammer execution video, I think Yevgeny Prigozhin said, you know, a dog receives a dog's death, so not exactly backing away from the brutality that we saw witnessed, but contrasting that with the, you know, dozens confirmed, but more likely hundreds, of civilian fatalities that the Wagner Group is responsible for, fighting alongside Malian forces, some of their work in the Central African Republic, a bit less of a clear line on their work in Libya and Mozambique as well.

Can you speak to the current status of this Administration's views on the Wagner Group? I know there has been some discussion on the possibility of them being listed as a foreign terrorist organization, you know, by the State Department, getting on that FTO list. Can you speak to where that stands right now and what impact a potential FTO inclusion might have?

Ms. PHEE. Thanks for raising this issue because it is such a concern for Africans and, therefore, for us. Ambassador O'Brien would probably be the better source of information about what would be next in terms of FTO.

You know, we have sanctioned Prigozhin and that we are working in tandem with the EU, for example, on other parallel sanctions.

Under Secretary Nuland recently traveled with an interagency group to the Sahel. She made very clear to the authorities in Mali that they would have no prospect of ever resuming a relationship with us if they did not cut that relationship with Wagner. She also engaged the transition authorities in Burkina Faso, to urge them not to respond to Wagner overtures.

And in the Central African Republic as well we continue to press firmly and to mobilize our partners active there. But we will come back to you on the FTO thing. That is in the sanctions world.

Mr. MELJER. Fair enough. And I guess one thing that has also been a little striking to me, I mean, Wagner Group has been going around Russian prisons, at least according to open source reporting, going around to Russian prisons, trying to recruit convicts, you know, promising them a get-out-of-jail-free card. Not the best deal in the world because that get-out-of-jail-free card goes through, you know, a meat grinder in Ukraine. But at the same time, they seem to be very hard up for personnel to support the Russian invasion and occupying forces there. They do not seem to be reducing, at least from what I have seen, their operations throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. Can you speak to how that has maybe—square that circle a little bit.

Ms. PHEE. It is one of the reasons why they are so dangerous in Africa, because they are extracting resources from African countries and funneling them back to Moscow. So that is why it is so

bad for Africa, right? Then they do not control their own resources and develop their own country.

So that is our assessment, that that line of resourcing is one of the reasons that they have kept the footholds that they have maintained so far on the continent.

Mr. MEIJER. And, you know, I have returned from a congressional delegation with Chairman Meeks to the South Pacific, and obviously a very different competitive landscape there. And I know this is important to the chairman, I think it is important to many of us on this committee, is making sure we are not leaving any territory up for grabs, that there aren't countries who have one offer on the table and it is not from the U.S.

We are already going to be hamstrung because we actually abide by the rule of law, because we believe in international institutions, because we are not in the business of bribing or threatening or cajoling the leaders of these countries in ways that the Russians have no issue doing, the Chinese have no issue doing.

A lot of the mal actors in the world are able to take advantage, you know, of that position. And I am proud of how the U.S. acts and how the U.S. operates, but making sure that, as the chairman mentioned in his opening remarks earlier, that we are, as a committee, doing everything we can to support engagement and a presence and making sure that we are not leaving any territory or any country feeling like there is only one offer on the table and it is coming from countries that they would prefer not to work with, because they know that what will be demanded of them in that transactional relationship will be required to be extracted from their country, is simply too high a price to say.

So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

And finally, we will turn to Representative Young Kim of California for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KIM OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Chairman. And I want to thank our Assistant Secretary Phee and Assistant Administrator Muyangwa.

Huawei is very active in Sub-Saharan Africa and presents the United States with a significant obstacle to overcoming our efforts to promote secure global telecommunications and to compete with the CCP's malign influence on the continent. Huawei has built around 70 percent of Africa's 4G networks, and they intend to complete control over 5G networks in Africa. So I want to ask you what the State Department and USAID's strategy for promoting secure global telecommunications infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa is.

Ms. PHEE. Thank you for highlighting that challenge that the Chinese face and we face in terms of our partnership with Africa.

The State Department has recently established a new Bureau of Cyber Digital Policy, in part, to help us attack this challenge. We are also looking at mobilizing additional funds, which Dr. Monde can also speak about, in terms of a digital Africa program that we would discuss at the upcoming leaders summit.

We really want to work on making sure that the software, if you will, is secure and that governing rules are important. I mentioned earlier that we had mounted a successful campaign to have an American lead the U.N. body that sets internet rules, and we want

to help build the capacity of African governments and societies, ensure that they have an internet that helps them develop their economies and is secure.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you so much for that question. Adding on to what Assistant Secretary Phee mentioned, so the Digital Africa initiative really speaks to the key concerns that you have raised here today, and we expect to unveil that at the upcoming African Leaders Summit.

In addition to that, USAID is also working on very specific digital governance issues that speak to both misinformation and disinformation that tends to hollow out governance institutions but also hampers social cohesion in communities. We are also working to ensure that there is adequate legislation, to promote not just internet freedom but also protect rights on and offline.

So there is quite a lot that we are doing in that space, and we will be happy to provide you with more details.

Mrs. KIM OF CALIFORNIA. Sure. Can you talk about the challenges the United States faces in promoting private U.S. investment in securing the telecommunications infrastructure, and what is the Administration's plan for addressing those challenges and bringing the U.S. private sector investment into Sub-Saharan Africa?

Ms. PHEE. We have talked in this hearing about the importance of increasing private sector investment in Africa, and that is a two-fold process. We can do more to help identify opportunities for American companies, but—and particularly in our role engaging with governments.

We also need to press African governments to take steps that ensure that they have a more predictable, transparent operating environment so our business feels confident that they can repatriate their earnings, if there are disagreements, they can be resolved through a reliable judicial process, and other such elements of a good operating environment.

So it is a bit of push and pull. We need to do more, and they need to do better to attract investment.

Mrs. KIM OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you. I do want to get to getting your readout on Secretary Blinken's recent trip to Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. That was in response to rising violation—I mean, yes, violence in eastern DRC between government forces and M23 forces. So can you give us a readout on that?

Ms. PHEE. Definitely one of the main reasons he visited both Kinshasa and Kigali was to try and offer our good offices to help reduce the tensions between the two governments and stop the M23 activity.

We also wanted to encourage really dynamic African diplomacy. So the east African community, under the leadership of President Kenyatta, is working on a two-track process, bringing in troops to try and stop M23's advance, and sponsoring a negotiation track with the armed groups in eastern Congo, including M23.

The Angolans are also actively engaged trying to help support. They previously ran a process known as the Great Lakes process. And the Southern Africans, as part of the South African Development Community are also engaged. The U.N. is engaged.



So the situation is not good. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese have been displaced by M23's unacceptable offensive, but I am encouraged by regional efforts which we are attempting to support.

Mrs. KIM OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you very much. My time is up.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much.

Member questions are now concluded. So, in closing, I wanted to thank both of you, Assistant Administrator Muyangwa and, of course, Assistant Secretary Phee, for your work on behalf of our country, your patience with us today, for answering all of the questions and committing to answer the ones that you couldn't today in the coming days.

We ask a lot of you. We ask you to resolve these conflicts and advance human rights and promote American investment and to compete with our adversaries that are also looking to exercise malign influence in Africa.

We actually owe you something, which is to continue to provide the resources that you need to actually do those things, and I hope all of us, on a bipartisan basis. I think what we see from this hearing is a great interest in maintaining and enhancing American leadership in Africa. I hope we will all continue to work together to ensure that you have the resources to do that effectively.

With that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:43 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

**Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY), Chair**

November 10, 2022

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held in HVC 210 of the U.S. Capitol Building. Pursuant to H. Res. 8, Members who wish to participate remotely may do so via Cisco WebEx. The hearing is available by live webcast on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>.

**DATE:** Thursday, November 17, 2022

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m., EST

**LOCATION:** HVC 210

**SUBJECT:** Assessing the Biden Administration's U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa

**WITNESS:** The Honorable Molly Phee  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of African Affairs  
U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Monde Muyangwa  
Assistant Administrator  
Bureau for Africa  
U.S. Agency for International Development

\*NOTE: Witnesses may be added.

**By Direction of the Chair**

*The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.*

To fill out this form online: Either use the tab key to travel through each field or mouse click each line or within blue box. Type in information.

# COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Note: Red boxes with red type will NOT print.

Day Thursday Date 11/17/2022 Room HVC 210 & Cisco

Starting Time 10:29am Ending Time 1:46pm

Recesses 1 (11:59am to 1:01pm) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_)

## Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Gregory W. Meeks  
Rep. Tom Malinowski

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

To select a box, mouse click it, or tab to it and use the enter key to select. Another click on the same box will deselect it.

## TITLE OF HEARING:

*Assessing the Biden Administration's Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

*See attached.*

## NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

*None.*

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

## STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

*QFR - Sherman, Smith, Castro, Chabot*

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE \_\_\_\_\_  
or  
TIME ADJOURNED 1:46pm

Note: Please include accompanying witnesses with their titles, etc. (please note the fact that they are accompanying witnesses)

Clear Form

Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
*FULL COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE*

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
X	Ami Bera, CA
X	Joaquin Castro, TX
X	Dina Titus, NV
X	Ted Lieu, CA
X	Susan Wild, PA
X	Dean Phillips, MN
X	Ilhan Omar, MN
X	Colin Allred, TX
X	Andy Levin, MI
X	Abigail Spanberger, VA
X	Chrissy Houlahan, PA
X	Tom Malinowski, NJ
X	Andy Kim, NJ
X	Sara Jacobs, CA
X	Kathy Manning, NC
X	Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, FL
X	Jim Costa, CA
X	Juan Vargas, CA
X	Vicente Gonzalez, TX
X	Brad Schneider, IL

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Scott Perry, PA
X	Darrell Issa, CA
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Ann Wagner, MO
X	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
X	Ken Buck, CO
X	Tim Burchett, TN
X	Mark Green, TN
X	Andy Barr, KY
X	Greg Steube, FL
X	Dan Meuser, PA
X	Claudia Tenney, NY
X	August Pfluger, TX
X	Nicole Malliotakis, NY
X	Peter Meijer, MI
X	Ronny Jackson, TX
X	Young Kim, CA
X	Maria Elvira Salazar, FL

## RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**Questions for the Record from Representative Brad Sherman**  
**“Assessing the Biden Administration’s U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”**  
**House Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Thursday, November 17, 2022**

**Question**

How does our spending on documentation of human rights, justice and accountability in the conflict in Northern Ethiopia compare to what we’re spending on such documentation in Syria and Ukraine?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* During fiscal year 2022, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) allocated \$839,212 of its Economic Support Funds Forensic Anthropology (ESF FA) earmark (using FY19 and FY20 appropriations) to fund two programs on forensics and human rights documentation for northern Ethiopia. With a FY22 ESF FA earmark, DRL also is funding a nearly \$2 million transitional justice program in Ethiopia that includes documentation. For purposes of comparison, with FY21 funding, DRL spent \$666,667 in its ESF FA earmark, plus nearly \$4.7 million in ESF Syria funding, for human rights documentation in Syria; and approximately \$3 million in Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (AEECA) funding for documentation for justice and accountability in Ukraine. These larger allocations are possible because DRL has spent 10 years building up local capacity in Syria, and because extensive local capacity exists in Ukraine.

**Questions for the Record from Representative Christopher H. Smith**  
**“Assessing the Biden Administration’s U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”**  
**House Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Thursday, November 17, 2022**

**Question**

Regarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Is our Embassy in Kinshasa visiting the Kivus to assess the situation vis-à-vis M23?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* Embassy Kinshasa leadership visited Goma, North Kivu December 5 and delivered 17,500 tarpaulins that will provide shelter for 45,000 people displaced by M23 violence. They met with the Governor and humanitarian response partners to assess the impact of U.S. government assistance. The trip was covered on state TV and the Embassy messaged on social media to call attention to the disastrous humanitarian situation caused by M23 hostilities.

Generally speaking, however, United States Government travel to eastern DRC has been constrained by increased violence, including the M23 offensive and anti-MONUSCO protests. Most mission travel to Goma has been suspended since April 2022, with the exception of mission-critical travel conducted with significant mitigating measures. As conditions permit we will actively seek to expand travel. Embassy Kinshasa nonetheless maintains extensive contacts in the region and regularly reports on the M23 offensive.

**Question**

What is our embassy’s assessment with regard to foreign countries like Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya interfering with Congolese sovereignty in the Kivus and Ituri?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* For decades, the people of eastern DRC have suffered violence and insecurity, primarily perpetrated in recent years by foreign-backed and local armed groups and sometimes by DRC’s own security forces. Addressing the ongoing crisis and longstanding underlying grievances must take into account the role of the DRC’s neighbors, whether as a driver or mediator of insecurity. The Department of State has publicly and privately messaged the need to respect the DRC’s territorial integrity and to terminate any state support to armed groups. In response to recent advances by the M23 armed group, we have been vocal about our concern over Rwanda’s support to M23 and have called on Rwanda and all actors in the region to stop any support or cooperation with M23 or other armed groups. The United States strongly supports regional mediation efforts, including those led by Angola, Kenyan-led consultations between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and armed groups, and efforts of the East African Community. Embassy Kinshasa continues to work closely with our Embassies in Bujumbura, Kampala, Kigali, and Nairobi, and elsewhere to address the regional dynamics that have caused insecurity and instability in eastern DRC.

**Question**

Are our embassy personnel visiting places like Katanga to look at China's, and also Russia's, takeover of the mining sector, and the child labor abuses in artisanal mines and smelters? If so, what is their assessment?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* The United States is providing more than \$30 million in assistance to help the DRC promote responsible and sustainable mining practices and is actively exploring these efforts. As security and health conditions permit, Embassy Kinshasa visits sites in Katanga province and elsewhere to assess the labor and occupational safety situation in the mining sector. During 2022, high-level delegations from the National Security Council, Department of Labor, Department of the Treasury, and the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment have visited the DRC to engage on critical minerals. DRC Minister of Mines Antoinette N'Samba Kalambayi visited Washington, D.C. in mid-March 2022, and co-signed with Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Jose Fernandez a Memorandum of Understanding for the Department's Bureau of Energy Resources to support Congolese efforts to strengthen sector governance and predictability for investors and maximize benefits of mineral resource development for the Congolese people. USG agencies (DOL, USAID, State/INL) have assigned project personnel conducting significant work (\$40m in current USG investments). Despite some examples of improvement, the status of child labor and China's role in the mining sector remain significant concerns.

Most recently, an interagency team led by the USAID Mission Director visited Lubumbashi in June 2022 to participate in the DRC Mining Week, with USG-led events for women in mining, a booth in the exhibition hall to promote our USAID Clean Gold initiative, and a press event amplifying the USAID-Equity Bank partnership to unlock financial services and products to artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) operators in eastern DRC via USAID's Zahabu Safi (Clean Gold) Project.

In May 2021, President Tshisekedi announced his intention to review mining deals with the PRC that include unfavorable terms for the DRC. This is an ongoing process, and the United States has informed the DRC government of our support for its decision to review contracts and pursue greater accountability in the sector. Economic development should promote democratic governance, respect for human rights, and transparency

**Question**

What data regarding attacks on Christians in Nigeria was analyzed when the determination to leave out protection of religious freedom from the Biden administration's strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa was developed?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* Promoting and protecting religious freedom is a foundational pillar of U.S. law and policy and the Biden-Harris administration remains committed to actions and advocacy to advance this core value in Africa and elsewhere, including through implementation of the Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa. The strategy recasts traditional U.S. policy priorities into four organizing

objectives: fostering openness and open societies; delivering democratic and security dividends; advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity; and supporting conservation, climate adaptation, and just energy transition. The first two objectives define specific pathways to leverage our capabilities to maintain the strong U.S. tradition of protecting and promoting human rights, including religious freedom. The process to develop the strategy involved experts and practitioners from across the U.S. government who drew upon a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data to inform policy recommendations.

**Question**

Why did the Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy and Labor discontinue the project initiated by former Assistant Secretary Bob Destro to track who was responsible for attacks on farmers in Nigeria's Middle Belt? What was the rationale for not collecting data?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* To the best of my understanding, the referenced project was discontinued because senior Department leadership of the previous Administration failed to provide final approval. The State Department continues to monitor farmer-herder violence in Nigeria's Middle Belt utilizing other documentation tools.

We are also working to help Nigerians reduce farmer-herder conflicts. These efforts include programming to support community-based peacebuilding activities that engage farmer and herder association members, youth, and women in problem-solving dialogues. This programming supports efforts to build community-based early-warning, early-response mechanisms. In addition, we support inter-faith dialogue initiatives, modernization of herding and farming practices, expansion of employment opportunities, and improved service delivery for rural populations. We are also working with federal and state authorities in Nigeria to strengthen the capacity of the government's security and judicial sectors to achieve improved responses that protect civilians and respect human rights. We regularly engage Nigeria's government on issues related to farmer-herder conflicts as well as on issues related to criminal banditry—a separate problem but one that is sometimes conflated with farmer-herder violence—to press for and strengthen accountability mechanisms.

**Question**

Did the AF Bureau give input on this decision to not go forward with the data collection, and if so, what was the rationale?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* To the best of my understanding, the referenced project was discontinued because senior Department leadership of the previous Administration failed to provide final approval.

**Question**



What is our Embassy in Abuja's opinion as to whether the ruling All Progressives Congress, or APC, party, fielding a mono-religious President-Vice President slate will exacerbate religious violence, given the departure from past norms of religious and geographic balance and the hateful, supremacist rhetoric of some APC supporters?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* Embassy Abuja, and the Department of State as a whole, is committed to supporting free and fair elections that are conducted peacefully. We do not support any presidential or vice-presidential candidate, or the selection of any candidate with respect to their religion, region, ethnic group, or gender. We are focused on supporting the democratic process. Many leaders, in Nigeria, in the United States, and around the world, are able to effectively bridge religious differences to represent citizens who do not share their religion or belief.

**Question**

Can you provide details of Embassy efforts in Cameroon, the DRC, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan, to support faith-based organizations that provide some of the only support to local populations, stability, promote democracy?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* U.S. embassies across sub-Saharan Africa promote democracy and protect human rights of all persons, including freedom of religion and belief. Examples include the following. In Mozambique, U.S. Embassy Maputo has a strong track record of strategic religious engagement on interfaith cooperation. The Christian Council of Mozambique, the largest consortium of Christian churches in the country and a strong U.S. Embassy partner, is engaged in advocacy on behalf of women, children, LGBTQI+ persons, and other members of vulnerable groups, as well as on delivering humanitarian assistance. In South Sudan, embassy officials regularly participate in discussions with leaders of the South Sudan Islamic Council, South Sudan Council of Churches, Episcopal Church of South Sudan, Presbyterian Church, United Methodist Church, and Catholic Church on faith-based peace initiatives, implementation of the peace agreement signed in 2018, and religious tolerance. A/S Phee and other senior Africa bureau officials have also held discussions with Catholic, Presbyterian, and Anglican leaders regarding South Sudan. Although travel by U.S. government officials remains limited in Somalia, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu engages with officials and opposition figures to dissuade the use of religion to threaten those with differing political or religious perspectives. The U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and other senior U.S. embassy officials have engaged with various religious groups, including the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Society for the Support of Islam, the Islamic Society of Removal of Innovation and Reestablishment of the Sunna, and others this year. In the DRC, U.S. Embassy Kinshasa frequently engages faith-based organizations, including the National Council of Catholic Bishops (CENCO) and Protestant Church of Christ in Congo (ECC), which play an active role in engagement with the DRC government, opposition parties, and civil society on electoral issues. U.S. Embassy Kinshasa also regularly engages with faith-based organizations on the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution.

Through foreign assistance, embassies also support grants to local faith-based organizations. For example, in Cameroon, U.S. Embassy Yaoundé has supported faith-based organizations over the last

few fiscal years to support democratic governance, youth organizations, access to justice and peacebuilding, protection of human rights, and inclusive electoral processes. U.S. Embassy Juba in South Sudan recently supported programming to promote a culture of dialogue and peace among the warring communities in Western Equatoria as well as a program to increase journalist capacity on conflict-sensitive reporting, peace journalism, and reporting on human rights violations. U.S. Embassy Addis Ababa in Ethiopia awarded several grants to faith-based organizations to fund projects that encouraged religious tolerance and peace.

USAID DRC's funding is supporting election-related efforts of the Catholic and Protestant churches in the upcoming electoral cycle through a \$6 million international and domestic observation activity implemented by the Carter Center. The Carter Center is providing a grant to CENCO through its technical body, Justice and Peace Congo, to organize the domestic observation efforts in partnership with ECC. USAID Nigeria is currently supporting the Kaduna-based Interfaith Mediation Centre, an organization co-founded by an imam and a pastor, that supports the Centre's training of community leaders, giving them skills and knowledge to better mediate disputes. USAID Nigeria's funding is also supporting an ongoing project with the Justice, Development, and Peace Commission, a local affiliate of Caritas International, which trains religious and traditional leaders in interest-based negotiation techniques.

#### **Question**

Malawi and Zambia are two examples where democracy continues to grow. What is the State Department's analysis of why these countries have resisted authoritarian rule?

#### **Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* Citizens in Zambia and Malawi have used their vote to reject incumbents who failed to deliver economic opportunities and empower presidential challengers committed to democratic norms. Both countries enjoy long but imperfect records of democracy, and the administrations of Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera and Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema have actively worked to consolidate democratic gains, build stronger democratic institutions, and protect opposition voices. Strong civil society organizations, independent journalists, and independent watchdog agencies in both countries have space to operate and have prioritized holding government officials accountable for misuse of power, regardless of party affiliation.

#### **Question**

What are the U.S. Embassies in Lilongwe and Lusaka doing to support civil society?

#### **Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* The U.S. Embassies in Lilongwe and Lusaka actively engage with civil society in both countries to ensure the U.S. government remains an advocate for a wide array of local voices, concerns, and priorities. Embassies in both countries award, manage, and direct funding mechanisms from multiple U.S. agencies in a concerted effort to empower and strengthen the ability of civil society organizations to represent marginalized voices and hold government actors accountable. Both embassies also engage regularly with the highest levels of the Malawian and

Zambian governments to call for the repeal of inherited, repressive legislation and the codification of protections for opposition and independent voices.

**Question**

Given that HH in Zambia is pushing back against Chinese influence, what are we doing to specifically support him?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* The U.S. government is deploying a wide range of public and private support to strengthen Zambia's democracy, reignite private sector-led growth, and deepen ties with the United States—all of which serve to counter PRC influence. Over the last 12 months, a range of U.S. leaders from the State Department, USAID, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Department of Defense have travelled to Zambia and met with President Hichilema and his closest advisors to operationalize the Zambian Government's commitments in these areas. We have been a strong advocate for multilateral efforts to restructure Zambia's external debt, much of which is help by PRC-based institutions. U.S. officials are also working with Zambian government counterparts to support Zambia's role as the African co-host for the second Summit for Democracy.

**Question**

During Zambia's elections, one reason that democracy prevailed is because results were reported from polling stations to EU observers. What is the State Department and USAID doing to ensure that data from polling stations in the DRC is similarly accurately reported, and what is being done to ensure that organizations like CENCO – the Catholic Bishop's Conference – are allowed to observe voting, so as to avoid the debacle that occurred under Ambassador Hammer's tenure where he blessed what was an obviously fraudulent election result?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* Unlike the situation in 2018 under then-President Kabila, President Tshisekedi and his top aides have publicly committed to conducting free and fair elections consistent with constitutional deadlines. The current President of the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) Denis Kadima has also committed to well-managed elections held on time that are free and fair. The DRC conducted indirect gubernatorial elections in May, 2022, in 14 of 26 provinces, which were largely peaceful and included accredited national and international observers, including U.S. Embassy staff and representatives from other diplomatic missions.

Embassy Kinshasa and other U.S. representatives consistently message that the United States expects the DRC to conduct elections, consistent with constitutional deadlines, that are free and fair and reflect the will of the Congolese people. USAID is providing technical support to the CENI, countering disinformation, improving access to accurate information about electoral processes, and supporting civil society led civic and voter education. USAID is also readying plans to assist independent domestic and international observation efforts to improve confidence in the integrity of the outcomes. The United States has also encouraged President Tshisekedi to make a formal request to the United Nations to provide logistical and technical support to the elections. The Department

continues to press the DRC government and CENI to adhere to the planned electoral timeline, to maximize opportunities to be transparent on electoral processes and outcomes, and to ensure an open political environment for the Congolese people to express their views peacefully. The National Council of Catholic Bishops (CENCO) and Protestant Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) will remain key and credible voices to advocate for a peaceful and inclusive electoral process. In addition to regular engagement with these organizations by AF Assistant Secretary Molly Phee and U.S. Embassy Kinshasa, USAID funding will also support election-related efforts of the Catholic and Protestant churches in the upcoming electoral cycle through a \$6 million international and domestic observation activity implemented by the Carter Center. Under this award, the Carter Center will strengthen the capacity of local civil society partners to, over the long- and short-term, monitor elections and provide electoral observations and analysis. The Carter Center is providing a grant to CENCO through its technical body, Justice and Peace Congo (JPC), to organize the domestic observation efforts in partnership with ECC. The JPC/ECC consortium will lead an observation platform that will deploy civil society domestic observers throughout the 26 provinces in DRC.

**Question**

What is the Biden administration doing to support the establishment of a Criminal Tribunal for Liberia? The country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended in 2009 establishment of a war crimes court, and we held a hearing on this at the Lantos Commission, to seek justice for the victims of widespread and systematic violations of their human rights during Liberia's civil wars.

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* The Department of State supports justice and accountability for Liberians, including for perpetrators of civil war crimes. Liberians tell us they want the fight for justice to be Liberian-led. After the end of the brutal civil wars, Liberia established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission which issued a report with a series of important recommendations that have so far, unfortunately, not been fully implemented. We stand ready to be a partner to Liberia in justice and regularly urge the Liberian government and people to pursue action on these recommendations. If the Liberian government and people establish a War Crimes Court in Liberia, we would seek to support it as appropriate, including with potential technical assistance.

**Question**

What was the process for decision making at the Department of State to exclude religious freedom from the Biden Administration's strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa? Presumably the Office of International Religious Freedom at the State Department advocated for the inclusion of support for freedom of religion to be highlighted and prioritized – yet their voice was ignored. Why? What was the process that sided-lined advocacy for fundamental human rights?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee and Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* Promoting and protecting religious freedom is a foundational pillar of U.S. law and policy and the Biden-Harris

administration remains committed to actions and advocacy to advance this core value in Africa and elsewhere, including through implementation of the Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa. The strategy recasts traditional U.S. policy priorities into four organizing objectives: fostering openness and open societies; delivering democratic and security dividends; advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity; and supporting conservation, climate adaption, and just energy transition. The first two objectives define specific pathways to leverage our capabilities to maintain the strong U.S. tradition of protecting and promoting human rights, including religious freedom. The process to develop the strategy involved experts and practitioners from across the U.S. government who drew upon a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data to inform policy recommendations.

#### **Question**

Please assess whether the Cessation of Hostilities agreement between the government of Ethiopia and the TPLF is sustainable, and what about reports of ongoing violence in Oromia involving the Oromo Liberation Army?

#### **Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee and Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* We believe the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement is sustainable if both parties and the African Union remain committed to its implementation. Success will also require the departure of Eritrean forces from Ethiopia. The Department of State and Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Hammer are continuing diplomatic efforts to that end and actively working with international partners to advance stability and peace in northern Ethiopia.

We are also aware of reports of violence between armed groups and government forces in the region of Oromia which has reportedly resulted in civilian deaths. We have called on all armed actors to engage in political dialogue to end the fighting and to exercise restraint and respect for the lives, rights, and property of all those in Oromia and elsewhere. We are in regular dialogue with the government including most recently during the U.S. Africa Leaders Summit, on this issue and looking to help create space for peace.

**Questions for the Record Submitted by Rep. Joaquin Castro**  
**“Assessing the Biden Administration’s U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”**  
**House Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Thursday, November 17, 2022**

**Question**

The Brennan Center released a report on War Powers and authorities that allow the United States to train and equip partner military forces. One of these authorities is USC 127 (e), which allows the United States to support partner forces to combat terrorism. These authorities have been utilized for this purpose in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. It is the responsibility of ambassadors to assess the appropriateness of all programs being conducted in their area of responsibility, but the Brennan Center asserts that U.S. ambassadors in these regions are not properly equipped for this role. What specific training and support is provided to Chiefs of Mission in AF to enable them to evaluate 127 (e) proposals when they are engaging with the Department of Defense?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* The Department provides guidance and resources so that Chiefs of Mission (COMs) both understand and implement their concurrence role for 127e programs. One mechanism for providing this support is the Special Operations Forces (SOF) at Embassies Working Group, which convenes at the request of any embassy to inform decisions related to SOF activity, including 127e funded programs. Additionally, each COM is supported by a Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché who acts as the principal military advisor to the COM on all U.S. military activity. The Department prioritizes resources available to COMs to assist in making informed assessments and decisions related to U.S. military activities.

**Question**

Paul Rusesabagina, who is known worldwide for his heroism during the Rwandan genocide, is imprisoned in his homeland and has been designated as “wrongfully detained” by the State Department. He and his family are my constituents. Are avenues of communication open with the Rwandan government on this case, and are we making any progress toward Mr. Rusesabagina’s release?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* Since Mr. Rusesabagina was detained in August 2020, the Department of State has engaged with the Government of Rwanda frequently and at high levels on his case. Officials including the Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, the U.S. Ambassador and other embassy officials in Rwanda, and the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs have conveyed our strong concern about Mr.

Rusesabagina's detention. Secretary Blinken raised Mr. Rusesabagina's case with President Kagame during his August 12 visit to Kigali. State Department officials meet frequently with Mr. Rusesabagina's family, including on December 5, in advance of the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. We will remain engaged and will continue to raise the case with the Rwandan government as long as Mr. Rusesabagina remains detained.

**Question**

A long-standing civil conflict in Cameroon between the Government of Cameroon and insurgents fighting on behalf of its English-speaking population has reportedly caused 6,000 deaths and displaced 765,000 people. What is the United States doing to resolve this conflict and bring about peace and stability in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* We continue to condemn violence against civilians in the Northwest and Southwest (NOSO) regions of Cameroon by government and other actors and to emphasize that there is no military or violent solution to this crisis. Utilizing appropriate authorities, we have taken steps to impose visa restrictions on those undermining democracy, and Cameroon remains ineligible for trade benefits under AGOA. Through the Department of Justice, the U.S. Government also continues to hold accountable individuals living in the United States for any illegal actions that perpetuate the violence. We encourage the Cameroonian government to engage with a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society and members of the diaspora, towards a peaceful resolution of the crisis. We are actively supporting women-led peace-building civil society organizations in NOSO and providing humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced and to Cameroonian refugees who have fled across the border to Nigeria. We also continue to urge the Cameroonian government to accelerate its ongoing decentralization efforts to empower regional development and foster citizen-responsive governance.

**Question**

Recent news reports from Mali have described the withdrawal of French, British, and Ivorian troops, who were involved in counter-insurgency or the UN peacekeeping mission, as a product of disputes and frustration with the ruling military junta. I am concerned this will further complicate the struggle against jihadists who have destabilized large swaths of the country. What is the State Department's view of how these developments will affect the situation on the ground?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* The situation on the ground in Mali has been worsening for months, even prior to the French withdrawal. In 2022, conflict events reached the highest number since the conflict began in 2012. While ISIS-Sahel is gaining ground in eastern Mali,

the al-Qaeda-affiliated Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM) continues to dominate the militant milieu, staging complex attacks on security forces and exercising control over populations. The UN Peacekeeping Operation in Mali (MINUSMA) is not permitted to fulfill its mandate due to restrictions placed on it by the Malian transition government in partnership with the Wagner Group. The loss of the UK Long Range Reconnaissance Group with the upcoming withdrawal will further reduce MINUSMA'S capabilities.

We are preparing for a deterioration of the security situation in Mali by enhancing our security cooperation with Niger and increasing resilience efforts in coastal West Africa, including through implementation of the Global Fragility Act strategy.

**Question**

What do you see as the influence of Russian actors such as the Wagner Group on the policies of the Malian junta?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* We are concerned by the increase in allegations of human rights violations against the Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) accompanied by “white skinned soldiers” since the arrival of the Wagner Group. We are also concerned by the restrictions levied against MINUSMA regarding overflight, ground movement, and human rights investigations since the arrival of the Wagner Group in December 2021. We continue to urge the transition government to end its partnership with the Wagner Group. Wagner will not bring peace to Mali. Instead, Wagner will only divert natural and economic resources away from Mali's fight against terrorism.

**Question**

The insurgency in Cabo Delgado has severely challenged the Government of Mozambique, caused the displacement of thousands, and drawn an intervention by Rwandan troops and forces from Southern African Development Community (SADC) to bolster the government in Maputo. Has the regional military intervention had a positive effect?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* Regional military intervention in Cabo Delgado has brought security gains against ISIS-Mozambique (ISIS-M) by securing areas around Mocimboa da Praia and Palma, strategic population centers that ISIS-M had previously controlled. After the introduction of the Rwandan and Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional forces in July 2021, the Mozambican government published a reconstruction plan for Cabo Delgado. In August 2022, the government approved a long-term strategy to address the underlying causes of the conflict. Attacks on villages and isolated security and defense force



positions in Cabo Delgado have continued and spread into almost every district there and, including in September 2022 to northern Nampula province. However, Mozambique exported the first cargo of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the Eni-operated Coral Sul floating LNG project off the coast of Cabo Delgado on November 13.

**Question**

Mozambique is a target country of the Global Fragility Act. What resources does the United States plan to deploy to assist in stabilizing the country, whether through the GFA or under different authorities?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary of State Molly Phee:* To address the country's many challenges and promote long-term stability, the U.S. government provides over \$500 million annually in bilateral development assistance, more than 90 percent of which is targeted at health programming. The United States' assistance to Mozambique also focuses on strengthening the resilience of Mozambican individuals, communities, and institutions through the development of inclusive and open political participation and governance, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, security sector accountability, and social cohesion. As a priority partner country under the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, Mozambique will benefit from \$13.75 million in FY21 Prevention and Stabilization Fund resources to support initial Strategy implementation. Additional resources are intended on an annual basis to support the goals and objectives across the Strategy's ten-year time horizon.

**Question**

Countries throughout the African continent are being buffeted by economic shocks produced by the global pandemic, followed by the food and energy shortages that are a result of the Russian attack on Ukraine. As just one example, Ghana is experiencing its worst economic crisis in a generation, with consumer inflation reaching over 40% last month. I am concerned that political instability could be the next byproduct of these economic conditions.

Does the United States Agency for International Development share these concerns?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* Yes, USAID shares concerns about the implications of successive economic shocks for political stability in Africa. Stability was already a major issue before Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with a sharp increase in the number of African coups in 2020-2021. The war impacted fertilizer, food and energy supplies and prices in addition to the existing climatic stresses on food security.

**Question**

Do you expect the economic situation on the continent to worsen in the near-term?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* Yes, USAID expects the economic situation in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to continue to worsen in the near term. In 2021, the continent was on the path to recovery, with growth averaging about 4.5 percent in SSA. However, lingering effects of the pandemic, combined with the global economic slowdown, tightening global financial conditions, and rising food, fuel, and fertilizer prices have disrupted recovery. Regional growth in 2022 is expected to fall to around four percent, with global shocks having asymmetric impacts on countries. For example, economic recovery in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel may be delayed more than other regions due to climate impacts on regional agriculture, the predominant economic sector. In the immediate term, countries face a difficult balancing act, as they work to rebuild budgetary sustainability while responding to successive shocks and heightened uncertainty. Recent shocks have exacerbated pre-existing debt vulnerabilities across the continent, leading to public debt levels last seen in the early 2000s before the Heavily Indebted Poor Country debt relief initiative, and leaving over 20 SSA countries either in or at high risk of debt distress. More than 15 governments spent over 20 percent of their annual revenue on servicing public-sector external debt in 2021, and rising interest rates in advanced economies and a strong dollar pose significant risks to debt sustainability.

**Question**

What is USAID doing to mitigate the possibility of economic dissatisfaction turning into political instability in Ghana and elsewhere on the African continent?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* While International Monetary Fund (IMF) reforms are expected to lead to an improved economic situation in Ghana's future, they could make economic conditions for many citizens worse in the near term, as government support for a variety of programs and services will need to be scaled back. Economic conditions now are worse than at any point in the past 20 years—a period which included three prior IMF programs. A major deficit for Government of Ghana (GoG) funding is expected, making 2023 likely to be difficult for Ghanaians unless additional budgetary support can be provided by donors to enable the GoG to provide assistance to the struggling population. Ghana is predicted to see an increase of food insecure populations in Upper East and Upper West in the upcoming lean season. To help ease the burden of higher fertilizer costs this planting season, USAID's Mission in Ghana spent \$2.5 million of Ukraine supplemental funds in partnership with agricultural chemical company, Yara, to reduce the cost of fertilizer by one-third for 100,000 small-scale farmers. This year, USAID also began direct government transfers to support GoG nutrition and resilience programs in northern Ghana.

Additional government-to-government activities are expected to roll out in the new year. To

ensure that our 2020-2025 Country Strategy in Ghana is still relevant, in light of the economic crises and the insecurity threat from the Sahel, USAID's Mission in Ghana plans to conduct a mid-term review to ensure that current and future programming protect the development gains made and strengthen the country's resilience to future shocks. In the meantime, the Mission is pivoting key activities to mitigate some of the impacts from the current economic downturn.

At the upcoming 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, USAID will announce that it plans to spend \$2 billion on critical humanitarian assistance and resilience food security programming in Africa in 2023. USAID is also providing an additional \$145 million in funding to respond to the foodcrisis, including:

- \$100 million to accelerate last-mile delivery of agricultural tools, technologies, and production methods that will help smallholder farmers to boost their productivity, efficiency, and incomes in Burundi, DRC, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia
- \$25 million in support to the African Development Bank (AfDB) to provide financing and credit guarantees for the large-scale supply of fertilizer and other inputs (e.g., drought-resilient seeds) to help bridge a projected 2 million ton supply gap in fertilizers, aiming to increase access to fertilizer for 4.5 million African farmers
- \$10 million to Somalia
- \$3.5 million to Mauritania
- \$3.5 million to Chad
- \$3 million to Burkina Faso

Additionally, up to \$760 million of FY 2022 Economic Support Funds (ESF) provided under the Fiscal Year 2022 Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act (AUSAA) is meant to address urgent global food-security needs arising from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Much of this is going to mitigating efforts in hard-hit African countries. A total of \$90 million has already been added to existing contracts for Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, the Sahel, and Southern Africa.

Also related to food security and agriculture-led growth, Feed the Future (FtF) expanded this year from eight to 16 African countries, adding DRC, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia. (Already included in FtF were Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda.) USAID works with host governments in burgeoning democracies to demonstrate to citizens that democracy delivers services such as health, economic growth and education, enhanced gender equality and social inclusion, access to justice, security, and the ability to play a role in decisions that most affect their lives. This serves to limit potential backsliding, improving the potential for countries to come through problematic periods and maintain their democratic legitimacy.

#### **Question**

Press reports indicate that USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, which was created to streamline the response to humanitarian emergencies, is losing staff, struggling to hire new staff, and suffering from declining morale. If accurate, these problems would make it extremely difficult for USAID to effectively distribute and administer the funding the Congress is appropriating to mitigate the complex emergencies that have arisen around the world, including the food security crisis in parts of Africa. Are these reports accurate?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* While staffing constraints do exist within the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), USAID has made it a top priority to address these staffing issues while ensuring that appropriated funding is distributed quickly, strategically, and responsibly to meet food security and other crises in Africa and around the world. There is no question that BHA staffing, and associated Contracting Officer (CO) support, has not kept up with the growth in humanitarian budgets. This reflects decades of shortages in operating expenses to cover direct-hire staff in the Agency and has been felt most in BHA and the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA), which provides the required contracting officer support to BHA. USAID Administrator Samantha Power has made it a top priority to address long-standing issues in the USAID workforce and has prioritized this in our budget requests to Congress. Rightsizing the workforce will take time, but we remain deeply committed to meeting the needs of the world's most vulnerable, and ensuring USAID's workforce is staffed to do so.

**Question**

How are these personnel problems affecting USAID's operations on the African continent?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* BHA continues to sustain operational effectiveness amid increased staffing demands and humanitarian needs across Africa. USAID is implementing recruitment and retention reforms for the Agency's dedicated and talented workforce while continuing to provide robust humanitarian assistance to Africa, with more than \$6 billion in funding provided through BHA's Office of Africa in Fiscal Year 2022, a 46 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2021. One way that USAID is managing increased staffing demands is through special response capabilities, which allow BHA to deploy staff and balance staffing needs and resources to meet its most critical priorities on the African continent. For example, in March 2021, USAID launched a Disaster Assistance Response Team in Addis Ababa supported by a Response Management Team in Washington, D.C. to augment staffing for the complex emergency in Northern Ethiopia. In July 2022, USAID also launched an Elevated Bureau Response to increase operational staffing efforts for Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia teams addressing the unprecedented drought in the Horn of Africa. These responses allow BHA's Office of Africa to take better advantage of staff availability in other offices within BHA as well as from our surge mechanisms. USAID's approach in Africa continues to save lives and meet unprecedented levels of need brought on by a growing global food security crisis.

**Question**

What is USAID's plan to correct the problems in the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance and when can we expect to see improvements?

**Answer**

*USAID Assistant Administrator Monde Muyangwa:* USAID is pursuing multiple solutions to help improve staff retention within BHA, as well as to attract and hire additional staff. For example, the Agency has stood up a dedicated Humanitarian Assistance Foreign Service (FS) Backstop which it is actively recruiting for and staffing. The Agency has also made a commitment to allocate Operating Expense (OE) funding for additional Civil Service (CS) positions to BHA within the limits of this account and in balance with cross-Agency requirements. The Agency is utilizing the Foreign Service Limited (FSL) authority to allow BHA to convert approximately 80 mid-level positions (team leaders) from Personal Service Contracts (PSCs) to a U.S. Direct-Hire (USDH) term-limited mechanism that offers some federal government benefits. This process will begin in Fiscal Year 2023 and is anticipated to increase interest in these positions and improve staff retention. The Agency is also pursuing the authority to create and hire a cadre of Civil Service term-limited positions. While these USDH options are in their early stages, the Agency continues to consider areas, within procurement parameters, where the PSC mechanism could be updated to become more competitive in the marketplace. The Agency is also implementing a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan, which is a framework for envisioning, creating, and sustaining a diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace. While these solutions will take time over the next few years to be fully realized, incremental and impactful progress has been and will continue to be made. We welcome ongoing congressional engagement on this topic.

**Questions for the Record from Representative Steve Chabot**  
**“Assessing the Biden Administration’s U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”**  
**House Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Thursday, November 17, 2022**

**Question**

As the Co-Chair of the Nigeria Caucus, I’d like to follow up on something Mr. Smith has raised. I am deeply concerned about attacks conducted by Fulani herders against non-Fulani farmers. While these attacks are frequently presented along ethnic lines, and driven by climate change, the facts on the ground make clear that they have religious motivations as well, directed in particular against Christians. Indeed, this is likely the best overarching description of this complex problem. Unfortunately, the Nigerian Government has failed to respond adequately by holding perpetrators accountable, and possibly abetted such violence. In light of this, why has the administration failed to relist Nigeria as a country of particular concern for religious freedom?

**Answer**

*Assistant Secretary Molly Phee:* The Department is deeply concerned about the overall security situation in Nigeria, including threats by ISIS-West Africa, Boko Haram, groups engaged in banditry and kidnapping, and violent clashes between nomadic animal herders and farmers. These conflicts between herders (often but not always Muslim) and farmers (Muslim and Christian) can at times uniquely target or impact members of certain ethnic or religious communities. Many experts have concluded, however, that ethnicity and religion are not the primary drivers of these conflicts, pointing instead to increasing competition over dwindling land and water resources, ineffective mechanisms to resolve disputes, the proliferation of small arms, inadequate security provision, and impunity.

Protecting and advancing religious freedom is a top priority for U.S. policy in Nigeria and is independent of any designation for religious freedom. U.S. law requires that a country be designated a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for religious freedom if “the government of that country has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom.” The Secretary determined in 2021 that Nigeria did not meet the legal threshold for CPC designation. Although Nigerian government responses to farmer-herder conflicts are at times inadequate, in general, Nigeria’s government has been proactively working to address farmer-herder conflicts. Among other actions, the government has introduced more sustainable cattle-rearing reforms, increased security operations in affected areas, and supported conflict resolution initiatives to prevent and address violence between Christian and Muslim and/or ethnic communities.