

**Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson  
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Subcommittee on African Affairs  
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I would like to thank you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and all the members of the Committee for inviting my colleagues and me to testify today on the President's budget request for Sub-Saharan Africa. As this is my first appearance before this Congress, I wish to congratulate you Chairman Coons on your election to the Senate and for assuming the leadership of the African Affairs Subcommittee as a new member. Senator Isakson, congratulations on your reelection and for remaining as the minority leader of the Subcommittee. I greatly appreciate your passion for Africa and commitment to realizing our nation's goals and interests there.

The President's FY 2012 request for Sub-Saharan Africa reflects our core U.S. priorities and interests in Africa. I would like to highlight

those priorities, interests, and some of the major policy challenges and opportunities we face on the continent.

We remain committed to five overarching policy priorities: 1) strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law; 2) encouraging long-term development and growth, including food security; 3) enhancing access to quality health care and education; 4) assisting in the prevention, mitigation, and resolution of conflicts; and 5) working with Africans to address transnational challenges, including terrorism, maritime security, climate change, narcotics trafficking, and trafficking in persons.

The FY 2012 request of \$7.8 billion represents a 10 percent (\$732.7 million) overall increase from the FY 2010 enacted total of \$7.0 billion. This increase is due in large measure to increases requested for each of the Presidential Initiatives. The request for Global Climate Change has increased by 140.9 percent (\$73.7 million), Feed the Future by 20 percent (\$84.4 million), and Global Health by 12.6 percent (\$601.22 million). Our request for discretionary funds to support non-initiative programs is \$1.8 billion. They include programs focused on

enhancing democracy and governance, economic growth, conflict resolution, and transnational issues.

The United States has many challenges and commitments around the globe, but it is important for us not to lose sight of our growing national interests in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa is a region where the United States has benefited from longstanding partnerships and friendships and enjoys some of the highest approval ratings in the world. The ties between Americans and Africans are deep and historic. With few exceptions, Africa is not a place where we see anti-American demonstrations and rhetoric. That is indicative of the prevailing appreciation for our country's longstanding commitment to democracy and human rights, and for our steadfast support in addressing Africa's many challenges and during times of trouble. The spread of democracy in Africa over the past two decades and the vibrancy of pro-democracy activism across the continent is further evidence that most Africans share our political values.

In the international arena, we might not see eye-to-eye with Africans on every issue, but, overall, most governments there have been

cooperative as we deal with a variety of global challenges such as international terrorism, Iran, and piracy. We saw one recent example of this when Gabon, Nigeria, and South Africa voted in support of the U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force to avert a humanitarian catastrophe in Libya.

Our economic interests in Africa are clear and compelling. Approximately 14 percent of U.S. oil imports come from the region, making it a strategic part of our energy security portfolio. Imports from Nigeria alone are about 9 percent of our total oil imports and almost the same volume as those from Saudi Arabia. With promising exploration and development in countries such as Ghana, Uganda, Liberia, and Tanzania, Sub-Saharan Africa's significance for global oil and gas markets will only increase in the coming years. Africa's enormous share of the world's mineral reserves is vital for sustaining continued growth of the global economy. And, most importantly, Sub-Saharan Africa's growing population makes it a market where U.S. firms will need to be players if they are to remain globally competitive. The region's share of

the world population today is approximately 12 percent, and it is estimated to grow to 20 percent over the next two decades.

Helping African countries, no matter how small and poor, realize their full potential and succeed as economically viable democracies is in our national interest. If fledgling democracies are allowed to fail and undemocratic regimes are allowed to endure unchallenged, then people will lose confidence in democracy and free market economic principles, and we will find ourselves on the defensive in the global competition for influence and ideas. Many Sub-Saharan African countries face enormous challenges to their survival as functioning states, and we must continue to help them meet those challenges so they can better help us as we deal with our own. In the coming years, African cooperation will be increasingly essential in managing a wide range of global issues such as smuggling, piracy, migration, climate change, infectious disease, and food production.

With our limited resources and personnel, we are managing a long list of near and long-term challenges that have a direct impact on U.S. security, political, economic, and humanitarian interests. Nigeria, where

I was this past weekend, is in the middle of a tense election process that will have serious repercussions for its near and long-term stability. In Sudan, the six-year-old North-South peace process is at an extremely delicate moment with independence for the South just about three months away. Diplomatic efforts on Darfur are accelerating again, but a solution is still far away. The situation in Somalia remains especially volatile and poses security threats throughout East Africa and in the Indian Ocean. We may also be on the precipice of a humanitarian catastrophe there as food supplies once again run low.

The political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire has escalated into armed conflict and unleashed one of West Africa's worst humanitarian crises since the Liberian war. The eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains highly insecure, especially for women and children. That country is scheduled to have elections in November that will serve as a bellwether for its post-conflict transition. Uganda and its neighbors are struggling to eliminate the Lord's Resistance Army, which still threaten civilian populations in northern DRC and the Central African Republic. In Zimbabwe, President Mugabe and his ruling

ZANU-PF party continue to obstruct the democratic process and mismanage the economy, creating a persistent and long-term threat to the country's overall stability.

Beyond these fast-moving issues which dominate the headlines, our government is trying to address a number of slower moving but nonetheless high-impact challenges. The greatest of these is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases which have tragic consequences for economic livelihoods and social welfare of Africans across the continent. My colleague, Ambassador Eric Goosby will address this in greater detail. It is estimated that some 22.5 million Africans are living with HIV/AIDS, about two-thirds of the world's total. Millions more suffer and die regularly from malaria and other debilitating but preventable endemic diseases. Women and children suffer disproportionately.

Although a handful of African countries have demonstrated improved rates of macroeconomic growth compared to previous decades, the overall poverty and social indicators for much of the continent are sobering. Ethiopia's per capita GDP, for example, is \$344.

Life expectancy in Nigeria is 48. Basic infrastructure is lacking in many countries struggling to keep up with their growing populations, especially in urban areas. As of last year, Southern Sudan had only 50 kilometers of paved road. And food security remains an ongoing concern across much of the continent.

I have already alluded to some of the many security challenges in Africa. There are others such as the presence of terrorist groups and drug traffickers in the Sahara, and the ascendance of drug trafficking in countries such as Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. Our preferred approach to all of these challenges is to work through African security and judicial institutions and develop their capacity rather than rely on direct and potentially costly U.S. involvement. This approach may be slow and imperfect, but we believe it is the only truly sustainable one for the African context, and it is the most cost-effective approach for the United States. When Africans take ownership of their own security responsibilities, we are more likely to have the requisite trust and political buy-in of key players than if quick-fix solutions are imposed by outsiders. And this buy-in is what can lead to more durable outcomes.



To put it differently, the more proactive we are in encouraging and supporting African-led security initiatives, the less likely we will need to intervene directly down the road.

Africa's complex challenges demand considerable time, attention, and resources, but we must also be attentive to the significant gains and progress that have occurred in many countries over the past decade, and ensure they continue. Liberia and Sierra Leone, for example, require our engagement and support to help sustain their largely successful post-conflict transitions. Helping Africa's most democratic countries—such as Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Mauritius, Tanzania, and South Africa—continue with political and economic reforms is vital for demonstrating the sincerity of our commitment to democracy and encouraging other countries to follow their model. In recent years, regional organizations such as the African Union, Economic Community of West African States, East African Community, and the Southern African Development Community have demonstrated a growing commitment to, for example, censuring unconstitutional seizures of power, promoting economic integration, and addressing

regional security problems. It is in our interest to see that these organizations continue to build capacity and become more assertive across the continent.

I have worked on Africa for my entire career of more than forty years, yet, whenever I review the budget numbers, I am still amazed at how our government manages to do so much with so little. Roughly speaking, one can easily fit the landmasses of the United States, China, and Western Europe in Sub-Saharan Africa. After Southern Sudan becomes independent in July, Sub-Saharan Africa will have 49 states. We have 44 embassies, 5 consulates, and several regional platforms used by various U.S. government agencies. Those of you who have been out to the region know most of these missions are thinly staffed with an ambassador and a handful of reporting officers and support personnel.

In closing, I would like to state simply that every dollar we invest in helping Africans to address their problems and better capitalize on their opportunities may not satisfy our high expectations for economic growth, development, health, security, and political stability, but they sure can go a long way in preventing situations from getting worse and

costing us even more money down the road. And, as Ambassador Goosby and my colleagues from USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation will detail in their testimonies, many of our efforts do in fact have a very positive and significant impact on the lives of Africans. It is through these programs and our vigorous diplomacy that the United States will remain a player in Africa and protect and advance our interests there.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Committee members, thank you. I will be happy to address your more specific questions and concerns.