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**AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS
CROSS-CONTINENTAL PROGRESS**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am delighted to have the opportunity to appear before you today, in my first Senate testimony as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, to discuss our work with the African Union and African sub-regional organizations to advance freedom, peace, and prosperity in Africa.

I firmly believe there has never been a more auspicious time than now to consolidate the progress and promise of the continent. The emergence of an activist African Union (AU) with a modern, forward-looking agenda is one of the most important developments on the continent in decades. The AU offers a considerably more dynamic vision of the future than did its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity. The timing could not be better, coming as it does when we have embraced a US - Africa partnership that will allow the United States and the AU to jointly advance our many shared key goals including promoting prosperity, good governance, social and economic development, and combating terrorism.

Most importantly, the African Union and some of the regional and sub-regional

organizations in Africa are demonstrating increasingly effective leadership in advancing these goals. Helping to strengthen further those organizations – to prepare them to be fully effective for the 21st century so they can address Africa’s challenges – is vital to US interests.

Our cooperative efforts with the AU and sub-regional organizations generally focus on the following key areas:

- Diplomatic cooperation to prevent conflicts when possible, and to resolve conflicts that have broken out.
- Support for regional or sub-regional military interventions when there is no other alternative to end violence.
- Assistance for capacity building and institution-strengthening.
- Support for efforts to promote trade, economic growth and development.
- Increasing cooperation in a broad range of areas key to achieving peace and prosperity in Africa, ranging from counter-terrorism, to disease eradication, to promotion of good governance.

Let me review briefly the efforts made by the AU and the sub-regional organizations, the support we have provided, and areas of needed future focus:

Conflict Resolution

The African Union and some of the sub-regional organizations, particularly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), have joined in mitigating conflicts

through peace support operations and diplomatic missions. African states have the capacity to staff peace support operations: many do not realize that African nations already provide close to 30% of United Nations peacekeeping forces worldwide, with four African countries — Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa — among the top ten UN troop contributors.

African states and organizations quite reasonably prefer that African forces, rather than non-African intervention, be the first approach to conflict response on the continent and we support that. In fact, in cases where political agreement and preparations for a UN Mission oftentimes involve months of delay, a deployment by peacekeeping forces from the African Union or other sub-regional organization is often the only response tool available.

The United States supports Africa peacekeeping in two major ways: through direct assistance to ongoing operations and through programs to enhance the capacity of African peacekeepers. In addition to US support for global UN peacekeeping operations – where the United States currently provides 27% of the funding for such operations – the United States has assisted the African Union to stand up operations first in Burundi and more recently in Darfur, Sudan. We also supported ECOWAS in Liberia in 2003 and Sierra Leone in 1998-2000.

In Burundi, we supported the AU's first such operation (AMIB), which was crucial in advancing the peace process and monitoring peace agreements reached

between the former Tutsi-dominated government and three main Hutu rebel groups. That Burundi operation transitioned into a United Nations peacekeeping operation, which successfully paved the way for elections that have installed a new government and Parliament. We contributed some \$11 million to the AU's Burundi effort, in addition to the money provided in support of the UN operation once the UN took charge. The AU did a good job in this first effort, but could not have succeeded in this very important endeavor without donor support.

In Darfur, Sudan, the AU has taken the next big step by taking on the daunting task of managing the deployment needed to seek peace in Darfur. Its staff and officials clearly have learned important lessons from their Burundi experience and their capabilities have improved. Still, they cannot do this alone. International partners are necessary, and the United States has shown that it is such a partner. We have put forward a major share of the funding needed to bring peace to Darfur, including providing over \$160 million in funding to support the AU deployment in Darfur. To date, we have provided over \$768 million in humanitarian relief in Darfur. It is vital that the AU effort succeed, and we are helping to ensure that it does. Our logistics support for the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) is key to its success, and we will not halt our PKO-funded support.

Separately, we are providing expertise in ways that help enhance the AU's capacity. The AU welcomes the opportunity for its staff to develop cooperative working relationships with non-African governments and organizations, such as the US and NATO. Through NATO, we and our NATO partners are providing training expertise

and airlift that are vital to the AU operation.

The African Union effort in Darfur has demonstrated why deployment of African troops is a viable option. It has also underscored the need for us to continue to work closely with the African Union to address continuing needs related to command and control that must be addressed to increase the effectiveness of AU interventions. The African Union showed that its majority Muslim (three of four major troop contributors have heavily Muslim forces - Nigeria – 50% of its contingent, Gambia – 95%, Senegal – 90%; Rwanda is only 1%) forces are best suited to address the complex social and political issues, in a context in which virtually all of the population is Muslim. The result has been impressive: where the African Union forces are deployed, large-scale organized violence has largely diminished. In many cases, the African Union commanders are also engaged in mitigating local disputes and in facilitating urgently needed humanitarian relief. While violence continues as a result of banditry, rebel attacks, and janjaweed actions, the African Union forces are playing a crucial role to help bring about an end to violence. To help ensure greater peace and stability in Darfur, we must simultaneously increase our support to the African Union forces in Darfur (AMIS) while working closely with the AU and other donors to press the parties to make additional political progress and determine next steps. Among those options that must be considered is a possible increased support role for the UN, or perhaps a transition to a UN mandate. We are consulting with the AU and our partners closely on such options.

The African Union's ongoing mediation of talks between the Sudanese

government and the Darfur rebels also highlights the value of the AU's dynamic, holistic approach to conflict resolution. African Union political offices and missions also have had some success in dealing with crises and helping to advance development of democracy in the region. For example, the AU is committed to sustaining the peace process in Cote d'Ivoire, begun earlier by ECOWAS and to which, I might add, the United States contributed over nine million dollars.

A key element of building capacity for the AU flows from our intended support for the AU's Africa Standby Force (ASF) and the national militaries that will make up that force. The AU plans for the ASF to provide both a rapid deployment capability to prevent mass violence or a longer-term force to sustain a peace agreement. Primary to our efforts is the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program that provides training to African regional organizations and national peacekeepers. ACOTA training activities will continue with Ghana, Senegal, Kenya, Mozambique, Gabon and others, while adding additional partner countries via funding through the Global Peace Operations Initiative. As part of the worldwide GPOI effort, the United States expects to provide training to at least 40,000 African peacekeepers over five years.

Training peacekeepers is not enough, so we will also support logistics, communications, training and other assistance to the AU and standby brigades. For example, over the past four years we have provided over \$11 million in equipment to establish and stock an ECOWAS peacekeeping logistics depot in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Equipment from the depot in turn has been vital in supplying ECOWAS and UN forces in Liberia, and Cote d'Ivoire, as well as AU forces in Darfur. The demonstrated value of that depot has shown that it will be worthwhile to provide equipment for the AU depot as well.

Additionally we are strengthening AU and ECOWAS communications capacity. The United States has provided some \$10 million worth of computer, radio, and other communications links to help ensure that ECOWAS member states can communicate smoothly, and that AU forces have the radio equipment they need to be effective. On the training front, we look forward to extending ACOTA multinational exercises to willing regional organizations in the near future and have recently provided support to peacekeeping training centers in Ghana and Mali.

Our ties with the African Union are growing stronger. We currently coordinate with the AU office in New York, including on UN matters. Congressional action and an Executive Order by President Bush have placed the AU on the list of Public International Organizations, entitled to official G visas and civil immunity for official acts, and the AU plans to open a Washington office this year. We plan to assist the AU in that effort as much as possible. The AU office will expedite and enhance contacts between the AU and Congress and with Executive Branch agencies. The AU also plans to have the staff of its Washington office reach out to the African diaspora and to the business community, and engage groups with a focus on Africa.

The Director of the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff, Dr. Stephen D. Krasner, hosted the first Planning Policy Talks with the AU on July 29, 2005 to help identify policy challenges and capacity needs. The talks covered a broad range of topics under the headings of democracy and governance, the Millennium Challenge Account, post-conflict reconstruction, and counter terrorism. The talks, which we hope will occur biannually, provide another vehicle for policy exchanges and information exchanges on sharing how we can support capacity building within the AU and among the member states.

We fully support the efforts of the AU to boost its counter terrorism (CT) capabilities. The AU has developed a strategy to create both an early warning center to counter terrorist threats and a regional CT training center as part of their CT center's mission. We support these goals, and are exploring ways to support these efforts with training opportunities, resources to increase CT cooperation in the region, and the provision of expert advice and guidance. We already have provided some \$250,000, for example, to help set up an anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist finance assistance program in West Africa through West Africa's Inter-Governmental Anti-Money Laundering Group. Most important, we will be working with our African partners to encourage the provision of adequate funding, personnel and support to the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algiers. The Department will be supporting a conference in February at the AU Center that will draw resources from trans-Saharan countries into the Center's mission.

Sub-Regional Organizations and Conflict Prevention

As we work with the African Union and sub-regional organizations to accelerate economic progress, we will support the development of African mechanisms that help to mitigate crises before they fester and erupt into conflict. Prevention and mitigation are ultimately far less costly to both the people of Africa and to their partners working with them toward a safe and free continent. The AU has several mechanisms to address this, including eminent persons who work to mediate crises; regional workshops on best practices in democracy and elections; and training and deployment of AU election monitors. As a result, the United States has the opportunity to work with the AU and sub-regional organizations to bring an end to conflict on the continent.

The Administration's approach to work with lead African mediators and multilaterally with the United Nations, African Union, and sub-regional organizations like ECOWAS has worked. As the member states demonstrate buy-in, I strongly support increasing our engagement with sub-regional organizations in the four distinct sub-regions of sub-Saharan Africa – Central, Western, Eastern and Southern Africa. The sub-regional organizations based on the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are recognized by the African Union as pillars of a continental architecture. They play a lead role in regional stability and will be the focus for regional African peacekeeping brigades of the AU's "African Stand By Force."

Sub-regional organizations can apply neighborly persuasion and even military

force to stabilize a country before it slips into conflict. There are disadvantages, however, when affected states feel their neighbor has taken too much interest in their internal affairs. Another important factor in the work of sub-regional organizations is leadership by a strong regional country, such as South Africa in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) or Nigeria in ECOWAS (two countries which combined have 50% of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP.) A strong lead nation seems to ensure a more effective sub-regional organization, but at times could also inhibit open and thorough discussion and examination of alternative policies.

We will support efforts by the AU and sub-regional organizations to speed up conclusion of their operational agreements, to clarify responsibilities and reduce costs while sharpening their focus.

The activities of three of the more developed sub-regional organizations illustrate issues they are tackling and the character of our engagement and partnership:

ECOWAS – The Economic Community of West African States

Nigeria plays a lead role, with French-speaking Senegal senior among ECOWAS's Francophone members. ECOWAS has one of the continent's most effective military arms. Its deployments have served as precursors to UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone, with ECOWAS still retaining a presence in both Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. President Obasanjo of Nigeria has both a role within ECOWAS and within the African Union (as Annual Chair of the AU Assembly), which

has illuminated some policy disconnects, particularly between the AU's Peace and Security Commission and ECOWAS, and between Nigeria and the office of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary. In addition to the funds contributed to the ECOWAS effort in Cote d'Ivoire, we contributed over \$19 million to ECOWAS for its outstanding effort in Liberia.

SADC – The Southern African Development Community

South Africa, the economic powerhouse of the continent, is the dominant player in SADC. The United States and South Africa have a shared interest in promoting peace and stability on the continent. Our already strong bilateral relationship is expanding to include greater military-to-military cooperation, including planning for training for peacekeeping operations. Our Ambassador to Botswana, where SADC has its headquarters, also serves as the Secretary of State's Representative to SADC and works closely with the organization. An effective SADC, working to enhance peace, stability, and prosperity in the continent is vital to US national interests.

IGAD – the Inter Governmental Authority on Development

Somalia continues to be a significant concern for the IGAD member-states of East Africa, particularly Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. The government of Kenya, under the auspices of IGAD, chaired the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, which concluded in October 2004 following the formation of a national parliament, election of a transitional president and formation of a transnational cabinet – collectively known as the

Somalia Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs). Although Somali parties remain divided by key issues that have prevented further progress in establishing the TFIs inside Somalia, IGAD member states continue to play a significant role in the ongoing political process. The international community, including the United States, is urging Somali leaders to reach a consensus agreement on these key issues, including how to address continued insecurity throughout Somalia, through dialogue at the cabinet and parliamentary levels. The United States has contributed some \$750,000 to IGAD's efforts to bring peace to Somalia. There is much yet to be done, but we will continue to coordinate our engagement in Somalia with our regional and international partners to support the establishment of effective governance in Somalia. IGAD also played a key mediation role in the Sudan North-South peace process.

Engaging with AU Institutions on Sustainable Development

Africa is not a continent of conflicts, despair, and disease. The bulk of the continent is *not* in crisis. Democratic elections are increasingly the norm, and economic growth is at its highest levels in nearly a decade. We are deeply engaged with African countries and institutions to support Africa's efforts to consolidate and build on the remarkable progress of recent years, as well as to prevent the outbreak of new conflict. Most of the more than three billion dollars in assistance that we provided to Africa last year supported bilateral programs at the country level. We also are working with the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the RECs in support of their programs to promote regional economic integration, good governance, and prosperity throughout the continent.

The RECs have a major role to play, not only in peace support operations, but also in promoting the regional economic integration that is so crucial to increasing trade and investment, which will drive growth and prosperity. In many respects the RECs have not advanced as far on the economic front as on the peace and security front, and further progress could be enhanced were there to be some rationalization of the current overlapping REC structure. However, we are seeing sustained efforts to break down barriers to trade and investment through, for example, customs unions and trade agreements by the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and others. Another example is the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Historically this was just a monetary union made up of the countries with currencies tied to the French Franc. In recent years, however, these countries have begun to work together in other ways as well. In FY 2003, the United States contributed \$250,000 to help the WAEMU improve its member countries' government debt issuance practices, and in recent years, FY2002 – FY2005, we have provided nearly \$5 million to the AU and to sub-regional organizations – WAEMU, COMESA, and the EAC – to advance regional trade and investment climate reform practices, develop regional financial markets, and provide technical assistance to increase trade and the free flow of goods, services and capital.

At the continent-wide level, we provide over \$100 million a year in funding for the African Development Bank, which in turn promotes economic development across Africa, giving special attention to national and multinational projects that promote

regional integration.

We hope to increase our engagement with both the AU and RECs to help build their capacity to accelerate economic growth and poverty alleviation through strategically targeted financial and technical support for their programs to promote trade, investment climate reform, transparency and good governance, sound management of natural resources, and social development.

The United States and its G8 partners have an ongoing dialogue with NEPAD and have made far-reaching commitments to develop enhanced partnerships with those countries that demonstrate commitment to AU/NEPAD's principles of sound economic, political, and social governance. In addition to our many bilateral programs that support the goals and objectives of the AU and NEPAD at a country level, we are supporting the realization of NEPAD programs such as the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Plan and NEPAD's efforts to facilitate and accelerate regional infrastructure development. Through the Africa Partnership Forum, which includes all of the major African institutions as well as development partners, we are developing a process to hold each other mutually accountable for fulfillment of our many respective commitments.

Africans themselves are also increasingly seeking to hold each other accountable. The NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a bold undertaking by and for African countries to review a country's economic, political and corporate governance in a

manner based on clear standards and criteria that reflect best practice. Nearly two dozen countries have signed up to be reviewed, and the first two reviews, of Ghana and Rwanda, including associated national action plans to address shortcomings, have been discussed at high levels and should be finalized by the end of the year.

Working with the AU through enhanced relationships, and with stronger sub-regional organizations, I believe we can secure the progress already underway. The AU and the sub-regional organizations have made major progress in the past five years, and the United States has made a major contribution to advancing stability and prosperity in Africa. Yet more needs to be done. We will continue our efforts to work with the UN to help us strengthen the AU as an institution and as a continental actor, and to support Africa's sub-regional organizations. We will also work to ensure that Africa and its people have a future which is not shadowed by images of conflict, refugees and corruption, but which, rather, is buoyed by commitments by African governments, organizations and non-African partners to ensure stability, development and good governance. Our vision is that African nations and peoples can enjoy the fruits of peace, democracy, prosperity, and good health. With your help, we will help make that vision a reality.

