



**CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA**

# **Priorities and Policy Recommendations on Africa for the Biden-Harris Administration**

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PREPARED BY

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COUNCIL ON  
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## Corporate Council on Africa Priorities and Policy Recommendations on Africa for the Biden-Harris Administration

### Opportunity to Chart a Strategic, Enduring U.S.-Africa Relationship

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A vibrant, robust, and mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and Africa underpins the Biden-Harris Administration’s Build Back Better objectives of facilitating an inclusive economic recovery, sustaining, and creating jobs for U.S. workers, eradicating COVID-19, and combatting climate change. Furthermore, active re-engagement with African countries and international organizations committed to Africa’s prosperity and development will buttress the United States’ commitment to restore alliances and leadership multilaterally.

The Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) welcomes the Biden-Harris Administration’s appeal to African Leaders to rebuild relationships premised on equal partnership and mutual trust, respect, and prosperity. We commend President Biden for making his commitment to reengage the African Union early in his Presidency. The President’s remarks before the 34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the African Union are a welcome tonal and policy shift for U.S.-Africa relations. CCA supports the Administration’s early signs of pursuing an active Africa strategy that matches the continent’s strategic importance for the U.S. in achieving its global economic and security objectives.

CCA looks forward to engaging with the Biden-Harris Administration to develop and implement a comprehensive U.S. strategy for Africa that will support inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economies across the continent and facilitate more U.S. exports and middle-class jobs in the United States. We encourage the Administration to see Africa as we see it: a continent full of opportunity and ready – now more than ever – for mutually beneficial partnership on equal footing with the United States.

Africa is not monolithic: its countries represent a diversity of history, culture, people, and language. While Africa is complex, its strategic and economic relevance to the United States is clear:

- **Demographics.** By 2050, a quarter of the world’s population will be African. In that same year, two in every five children will be born in Africa. The continent is already one of the fastest growing consumer markets in the world with 1.7 billion people, and its growing middle class and large youth population represent significant export opportunities for U.S. goods and services. A productive youth population not only expands U.S. market opportunities but also reduces the conditions that foster global insecurity.

- **Dynamism.** Despite the pandemic, Africa boasts seven of the fastest growing economies in the world in 2020. Economic development is essential to revitalize markets, encourage private investment, and address secondary social and economic impacts caused by the pandemic. Africa is producing much of the world's next generation of entrepreneurs, innovators, and technology experts, who aspire to create jobs, fix inequities, and address political, social, and economic challenges across the continent and the world. U.S. companies are their natural commercial partners and service providers in achieving much-needed economic diversification.
- **Democracy.** While progress toward democracy has been uneven in Africa, Afrobarometer polls that seven in ten Africans aspire to live under democratic governments. The U.S. can be catalytic in broadening democratic values and advancing the use of technologies that promote inclusive societies and economies, transparency, and competitive markets.

In light of these factors, the Administration has an opportunity to deploy a coherent, coordinated Africa strategy that promotes mutually beneficial trade and commercial partnerships that will shape our world for many generations. A peaceful, prosperous, secure, and equitable Africa is in the U.S. interest.

## U.S.-Africa Economic Partnerships Support Build Back Better

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We believe that a vibrant and modern U.S.-Africa economic and trade relationship will meaningfully advance the Biden-Harris Administration's objectives for Build Back Better, particularly in the areas of economic recovery, pandemic relief, and inclusive investment and trade opportunities for U.S. workers and small businesses. CCA and its members are equipped to carry out those objectives.

Established in 1993, CCA is the leading trade association solely focused on promoting trade and investment between the United States and the nations of Africa. Our members represent small businesses, multinationals, and not-for-profit organizations in the United States and Africa. CCA serves as a neutral, trusted intermediary connecting its member firms with essential government and business leaders to do business and succeed in Africa. Our members offer specialized expertise and perspectives from the most promising sectors for stronger U.S.-Africa relations: agribusiness, energy, finance, healthcare, infrastructure, logistics, technology, and tourism.

CCA and our member companies consistently represent the best of American values and embody the value proposition of partnering with American businesses and investors. Our member companies employ workers across the United States and across Africa. Their operations deploy global best practices in environmental protections, labor practices, and corporate governance. Wherever they operate, they offer the highest quality, cutting-edge technologies, and services, coupled with investments in skills training, education, and job creation. U.S. policy toward Africa must consider and reflect the enormous opportunity for stronger U.S.-Africa trade and economic ties, laying a stable foundation for mutual trust, security, trade, and prosperity. Moreover, sustained economic prosperity and development promotes security, reduces instability, and removes conditions that support the influence of bad actors.

## How To Fortify U.S.-Africa Economic Ties

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CCA looks forward to partnering with the Biden-Harris Administration to execute an Africa strategy that lays the foundation for healthy, prosperous, and mutually beneficial U.S.-Africa relations for generations to come. The recommendations that follow represent what we believe to be the **top five priorities** to build and fortify U.S.-Africa economic ties:

### Recommendation 1: Implement White House-Led, Comprehensive U.S.-Africa Strategy

The Administration should build on the model of existing U.S.-Africa initiatives, such as Power Africa, Prosper Africa, and the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA), to implement an all-of-government strategy for Africa led by the White House. President Biden's remarks before the 2021 African Union Summit conveyed that the White House attaches importance to the U.S.-Africa relationship, helpfully signaling that Africa's status will be appropriately elevated by this Administration. We believe a White House-led Africa strategy will bring clarity, consistency, and stability to U.S.-Africa relations, and recommend that it contain channels for private sector involvement. As the Administration develops and implements its Africa strategy, it can rely on CCA, its members representing key growth sectors, and its extensive contacts with U.S. and African government and private sector leaders to support the development and implementation of the strategy.

## Recommendation 2: Resume U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit

Building on our first recommendation, we urge the Biden-Harris Administration to make an early statement of intent to resume the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit, initiated by President Obama in 2014 that was the first ever U.S. convening of a Summit and was attended by some 50 African Heads of State to discuss a range of issues impacting the U.S.-Africa relationship. While the health crisis may prevent such an event this year, an early statement in support of such an initiative would serve to signal Africa's importance to the United States and pave the way for a successful Summit. CCA offers our full support in preparing for and convening such a Summit that includes high-level private sector engagement.

## Recommendation 3: Modernize the U.S.-Africa Trade and Investment Relationship

Start planning and implementing a comprehensive longer-term U.S.-Africa trade and investment strategy, one that will build on AGOA (which expires in 2025) and potentially go beyond AGOA unilateral preferences to develop two-way trade agreements, including possible free trade agreements. Such a strategy should take account of the capacity and needs of African partners at varying levels of development, the market opportunities facilitated by African regional integration resulting from the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA), and the evolving and robust economic partnership arrangements that Africans are negotiating with other trade partners. Digital trade is central to encouraging stronger partnerships between the U.S. and Africa and will discipline against digital protectionism affecting all sectors of the economy. We encourage the Administration to remain an active observer and technical advisor to the African Union on implementation of and further negotiations under the AfCFTA. CCA will enhance our support for existing U.S. trade initiatives in Africa, including AGOA, Prosper Africa, the U.S.-Kenya free trade negotiations, and for new initiatives the Biden-Harris Administration launches to modernize the U.S.-Africa trade and investment relationship.

#### **Recommendation 4: Support Innovative Financing Solutions Essential to U.S. Private Investment and Successful Project Models in Africa**

Continue the Prosper Africa strategy that utilizes a whole-of-government approach to support U.S. companies doing business in Africa and deploys the complete range of U.S. government agencies and tools to support post-pandemic economic recovery, scale up economic growth, create jobs, and support U.S.-Africa trade and investment. Specifically, we recommend fully leveraging the BUILD Act – which doubled the assets of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation – to unlock private capital and working to modernize EXIM Bank’s mandate to help U.S. exporters, manufacturers and project developers compete on a level playing field. Furthermore, the U.S. Government should effectively leverage its membership in multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, to facilitate U.S. investments in and exports to Africa. CCA looks forward to working strategically with the Biden-Harris Administration to use the full range of U.S. tools to facilitate commercial partnerships and deals, and to identify ways to scale up traditional and innovative finance tools and platforms supporting successful business ventures and projects on the continent.

#### **Recommendation 5: Strengthen Collaboration with African Nations on Pandemic Recovery and Global Health Security**

As President Biden said in his February remarks to the African Union, priority challenges on the U.S.-Africa agenda include global health, defeating COVID-19 and preventing, detecting, and responding to future health challenges. U.S.-Africa cooperation – including the private sector – will be crucial to helping Africa address these needs. The Administration should build on its wise decisions to rejoin the WHO and contribute to the vaccine pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator (COVAX). CCA also recommends that the Administration continue its collaboration with the African Union through the African CDC, the WHO's Regional Office for Africa in Brazzaville, and the health units of the Regional Economic Communities. In the coming months, this renewed focus on global health will help Africa to address the immediate challenges of COVID-19 by ensuring equitable delivery of vaccines across the Continent. In the long-term, it will secure a healthier and more prosperous future for both Africa and the United States. CCA pledges to use the platform of its U.S.-Africa Health Security and Resilience initiative and the support of our many health sector members to work closely with the Biden-Harris Administration to address pandemic recovery and global health security.