

Us-Africa Strategic Partnership; A Lynchpin To Us National Security And The Advancement Of American Values And Global Priorities

Edson Alie Kamara

Department of Social Sciences, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone

Abstract: *The firm and widespread misperception among U.S nationals and a lot of foreign policy experts that Africa is fundamentally irrelevant to US national security is a deliberate attempt to undermine U.S national security, the quest to maintain its international standing and greater opportunity to advance an international order and deepening relations with African states.*

Pockets of conflict, humanitarian crisis, and mass atrocities in the continent place a huge demand on the United States to take action and discharge its notable global leadership responsibility. Even though the notion of maintaining the United States' role as "global policeman," is challenged by many, military and counterterrorism strategists firmly maintain that, because of the complex and dangerous nature of the present-day global environment, it is not enough to "merely keep Americans safe on American soil". Certainly, the justification for promoting peace, stability, and development surpasses that; it reflects how the United States has traditionally perceived itself in the world stage, by projecting its leadership and values that promote human dignity.

Also, transnational threats from the continent of Africa are existent and unrelenting. Africa's patchy democratic and economic development and incidents of conflict contribute to an increase in the number of fragile and failed states, which pose a severe threat to U.S national security and interests at home and abroad by way of creating a haven for terrorist organizations, criminal activities, and a breeding ground for pandemics. A case in point is the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and other hostile groups like Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, etc. are gaining grounds across Africa.

If conflict, humanitarian crises, and transnational threats present no tangible reasons for U.S involvement in Africa, political and economic interests will inevitably magnetize the United States to Africa. Because of US' underinvestment in African markets, global contenders like China are building deep economic inroads that are feeding industries and creating jobs in their countries and promoting economic ties that will be transformed into firm political influence. Though not always a zero-sum calculus, China's strong relations with African governments will inevitably shrink the influence of the US. Besides, states in African are forming an ever more united voice and a formidable voting bloc on global matters, especially in international platforms; these could either help promote or block crucial aspects of the US' universal agenda on matters stretching from counterterrorism to nuclear security.

However, this paper is set to refute claims that Africa is of less significance to U. S' national security, global influence/priorities, and economic affluence. It brightly outlines the significance of Africa to the furtherance of the United States' national security, and global priorities. Thus, draws the attention of pessimists to the need for a US-Africa genuine partnership.

Keywords: *Terrorism, Trafficking, Piracy, Proliferation, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), African Union (AU), United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).*

I. Introduction

The role of the US in international affairs is guided by an interest to maintain global peace and at the same time protecting its national security and economic interests. Stability in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa is fundamental to US national security. As recorded by Fund for Peace, the three most fragile states in 2017 were found in Africa—the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Somalia. Apart from these three states, several other African states are also fragile and plagued with "standard measures" of insecurity, such as pervasive corruption, weak institutions, and resource paucity. Collectively, these problems are drivers of instability, which lead to questions of regime legitimacy, human-rights abuses, refugee crises, and power vacuums where non-state actors can flourish. The United States should be mindful of these issues not only for moral reasons but also because they can negatively impact on American interests.

U.S' dealings with Africa is often measured as philanthropic (i.e., of marginal advantage to the United States and its people), or imperative to US security only with regards to counterterrorism. This is an ill-guided and naive belief. As Grant T. Harris, (May 2017) would put it - Africa is connected to an extensive and vast array of US economic and national security interests, and a comprehensive acknowledgment of these relations is urgently required to enhance informed policies and "strengthen US Africa relations".

The notion that U.S' dealings with Africa are altruistic or marginal to "core interests" will, more or less, invalidates the apparatus (financial resources and high-level attention) at the disposal of policymakers, firm U.S engagement on the continent, and result to loss of opportunities. Consequently, underinvestment in strategic "partnerships and capacity" in Africa will amplify the threat to U.S citizens both at home and overseas, and the decline in US influence in the global order.

As a dismissal to the fiction that Africa is of less significance to U. S' national security and economic affluence, this paper outlines vividly how quintessential Africa is to advancing United States' national security, global influence, and priorities, and the spread of US values. This makes it imperative for the U.S to make frantic effort to establish a genuine partnership (based on mutual respect) with African governments in addressing it threat issues stemming from the region. This paper further explores how transnational threats stemming from Africa threatens US national security, global influence, and priorities. It explains what needs to be done to protect America's national security interest in general.

"In reality, African countries are linked to a wide and growing range of US national security and economic interests, and a broader recognition of these links is urgently needed to better inform policy and strengthen United States Africa relations." Grant T. Harris, (May 2017 p2)

The statement above gives a vivid picture of the deep interconnectedness that exists between Africa and the US. It's equally a refutation of the pessimists claim that Africa is a burden instead of a partner to the United States. The following topics present viable proofs why Washington must establish with regarded a genuine partnership with Africa.

II. Us National Security Threats From Africa

It is an uncontested notion that fragile and failed states generate instability that directly serves as a threat to the national security of the United States. Most of the world's weak states are found in Africa. In 2016, African states took "nineteen out of the top twenty-five slots in the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index"¹ Be it terrorism or a pandemic virus, the United States must be willing to partner with African countries in broad cooperative regional responses, mainly because most of these threats are "overlapping and mutually reinforcing".

Trafficking

Africa hosts different kinds of illicit trade in environmental products, weapons, drugs, and persons—a lot of which follow parallel routes that build up terrorist and criminal networks in the continent and beyond. In most cases, this smuggled merchandise gets to the U.S; in all cases, this illicit trade threatens the peace and stability of African states, the security of borders, the rule of law, and legitimate trade.

First, the degree of trafficking in Africa has risen substantially for specific commodities. The continent is a growing transit point (and final destination) for banned drugs. Twenty-two years ago, about one metric ton of cocaine per annum was confiscated in the continent. More recently, at least twenty-two tons were seized within the space of sixteen months being smuggled to West Africa from South America.²

¹ Fund for Peace, "Fragile States Index 2016," <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/rankings-2016>.

² UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Drug Report 2016, https://www.unodc.org/doc/wdr2016/WORLD_DRUG_REPORT_2016_web.pdf, 39.

Twelve percent of the cocaine smuggled through Africa is headed for the United States.³ At the same time, wildlife trafficking has a devastating effect on iconic African species. For example, more than half of Tanzania's elephant population has disappeared. This number alone is enough to provide one hundred metric tons of illegal ivory on yearly bases for the past seven years.⁴

Secondly, trafficking is not just a source of instability, it is a symptom as well. Concerning the trafficking of drugs, the conducive atmosphere West Africa provides has been equated to those igniting drug-related unrest in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁵ The state of affairs in Guinea-Bissau regarding trafficking is worst, which is why the country has been branded a "narco-state."⁶ No wonder Guinea-Bissau's navy chief in 2013 was arrested by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) of the United States for trafficking cocaine across US borders.⁷

Also, a boom in weapons trafficking is stimulating violent actions. This is because governments in Africa have recently augmented the imports of weapons.⁸ Sadly, most of these legitimately acquired weapons fall on the wrong hands, thus, intensify regional conflicts. For example, in Mali, "most of the illicit flow is coming from licit stocks."⁹

The revenue generated from illicit trading in cocaine alone is worth about \$450 million per annum—which massively outweighs the salary of local security and law enforcement personnel. Thus, making them prone to accept bribes and effortlessly create room for widespread corruption.¹⁰ These illegal practices are bound to become embedded in societies. For instance, in the wildlife poaching industries, intelligence officers, government officials and security agencies like the armies have been culpably involved.¹¹ Moreover, trafficking undermines national growth by plummeting state revenues and cause industries that bank on sustainable natural resources to collapse. For example, 12 percent of Kenya's gross domestic product (GDP) is derived from wildlife-conservation tourism.¹² Hence, governments in Africa lose over \$50 billion every year as a result of illegal cash flows—this undermines states' stability which consequently triggers civil unrest (leaving institutions quintessential to tackling transnational threats to the US national interests fragile) instead of promoting development and flourish Africa's economy.¹³

Third, trafficking paves way for rebel factions to generate massive revenue, which fuels violent civil unrest. During the civil wars in Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone, a decade of bloody conflict was fueled by "conflict diamonds". In Sudan, profits made from illicit ivory trade were utilized by the Janjaweed militia to

³ *ibid.* See also Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 P8

⁴ UNODC, World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in Protected Species, 2016, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/wildlife/World_Wildlife_Crime_Report_2016_final.pdf, 42.

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

⁶ UNODC, "Perspectives: Guinea-Bissau, New Hub for Cocaine Trafficking," Issue 5, May 2008, https://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/Magazines/perspectives_5_WEB.pdf, 2, 4-7.

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

⁸ This includes North Africa. See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "The United States Leads Upward Trend in Arms Exports, Asian and Gulf States Arms Imports Up, says SIPRI," March 16, 2015, <https://www.sipri.org/media/pressrelease/2015/united-states-leads-upward-trend-arms-exports-asian-and-gulf-states-arms-imports-says-sipri>.

⁹ *Ibid* see also; Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 P8

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

¹¹ Jeffrey Gettleman, "Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy as Ivory Fuels Wars and Profits," New York Times, September 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/04/world/africa/africaselephants-are-being-slaughtered-in-poaching-frenzy.html>. See also "Wildlife Poaching Threatens Economic, Security Priorities in Africa," National Intelligence Council, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Wildlife_Poaching_White_Paper_2013.pdf, 3.

¹² Same Weru, "Wildlife Protection and Trafficking Assessment in Kenya: Drivers and Trends of Transnational Wildlife Crime in Kenya and its Role as a Transit Point for Trafficked Species in East Africa," Traffic Report, May 2016, <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/157301/27151701/1468499629057/Kenya-report.pdf?token=BVeoXs9G%2BqLXzuQ70BF8li648OM%3D>, 1.

¹³ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 P8

finance strife in Darfur. In central Africa, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is actively involved in elephant poaching to finance its ferocious engagement.¹⁴

Also, illegal trade in timber, gold, and charcoal has been a massive funding source for forty-nine armed militias in the Democratic Republic of Congo, frustrating international peacekeeping efforts.¹⁵ These Profitable trafficking cartels weakens states by stirring and funding armed militias. These conflicts account for about 1.6 million displaced people in Congo.¹⁶

Lastly, illicit trade has been the funding source of most terrorist organizations in and out of Africa. Human trafficking and drugs are believed to be the financial backbone for extremist groups like the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar Dine, AQIM, and Boko Haram. Also, Hezbollah, a United States designated "Foreign Terrorist Organization" in 1997.¹⁷ Is believed to be generating huge profit from cocaine flows through Africa to fund its activities.¹⁸ The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), by the same token, was associated with being in the business cocaine exporting in North and South America,¹⁹ while illicit trade of charcoal and previously ivory trafficking has been al-Shabaab' funding.²⁰

III. The Proliferation Of Weapons Of Mass Destruction

It takes a strategic partnership with and building the capacity of governments in Africa to lessen the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) to the United States. In the first place, state and non-state actors have taken advantage of weak institutions in African states to make easy the trafficking of WMDs. A case in point is Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan who surreptitiously passed through South Africa (among many other countries) with nuclear technology to supply buyers in Libya and North Korea in the 1990s and early 2000s.²¹ Moreover, what is of great concern is that African countries which supply 20 percent of the world's uranium, lack the security or verification capacity to prevent uranium resources from being contributing agents to nuclear weapons programs.²² Also, a significant number of African states have expressed the desire to develop nuclear power; also, radioactive sources are used in medical and industrial applications throughout the continent.²³ Poor governance and inadequate technical expertise could render nuclear facilities open to theft or sabotage by extremist groups/individuals in the hunt for the raw materials for a "dirty bomb". An antidote to threats of the

¹⁴ Gettleman, "Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy." United Nations Environment Programme and Interpol, The Rise of Environmental Crime(Nairobi: UNEP),2016,<http://web.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/erl/resources/publications/riseenvironmental-crime>, 11.

¹⁵ UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Interpol, "The Rise of Environmental Crime," 68-69.

¹⁶ Jason K. Stearns and Christoph Vogel, "The Landscape of Armed Groups in the Eastern Congo," The Center on International Cooperation, Congo Research Group, December 2015, <http://congoresearchgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CRG-Armed-Groups-in-the-Congo.pdf>, 5.

¹⁷ US Department of State, "ForeignTerroristOrganizations,"<https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

¹⁸ Matthew Levitt, "Hizbullah Narco-Terrorism: A Growing Cross-Border Threat," The Washington Institute, September 2012, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Levitt20120900_1.pdf, 34.

¹⁹ Wyler and Cook, "Illegal Drug Trade in Africa," 4. FARC was designated a "Foreign Terrorist Organization" in 1997. US Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

²⁰ UNEP and Interpol, The Rise of Environmental Crime, 11; Gettleman, "Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy"; International Fund for Animal Welfare, "Criminal Nature: The Global Security Implication of the Illegal Wildlife Trade," June 2013, https://www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/ifaw-criminal-nature-2013-lowres_0.pdf, 12-13.

²¹ Michael Laufer, "A. Q. Khan Nuclear Chronology," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 7, 2005, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2005/09/07/a.-q.-khan-nuclearchronology-pub-17420>. Non-proliferation Opportunity," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, November 2013, <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRI39.pdf>.

²² Concerns about the security of nuclear resources in Africa most recently reemerged with a break-in at Pelindaba nuclear reactor and research center in South Africa in 2007. See Michael Wines, "Break-In at Nuclear Site Baffles SouthAfrica,

"NewYorkTimes,November15,2007,<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/15/world/africa/15joburg.html>; See also Ian Anthony and Lina Grip, "Africa and the Global Market in Natural Uranium: From Proliferation Risk to

²³ World Nuclear Association, "Emerging Nuclear Energy Countries," last updated on March 2017, <http://www.worldnuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/others/emerging-nuclear-energy-countries.aspx>.

proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is nothing better than decisive cooperation with African governments and the African Union (AU), which have demonstrated firm commitment toward criminalizing the manufacturing and use of WMDs.²⁴

Piracy

Maritime piracy in Africa endangers the legal flow of international commerce—which impinges on energy prices and US commercial interests—and threatens the lives and assets of U.S. citizens, principally in two hotspots of high strategic significance.

The prime area of concern in Somalia, which accounts for about 12 to 20 percent of the world's ships sail along its coast and through the Gulf of Aden.²⁵ The peak of the piracy crisis in 2011 saw 237 ships being attacked, of which twenty-eight were successfully high jacked.²⁶

Before 2011, Somali piracy led to trade decline to the tune of \$22—25 billion a year of which the European Union (EU) suffered the vast majority of losses. The United States also bore around \$875 million in annual trade reductions.²⁷ Moreover, the lives of Americans have been directly threatened, and Somali pirates claimed the lives of some. About 3,741 crewmembers of 125 nationalities had been held hostage at different spots, as of 2013 and 97 sailors had been killed.²⁸ The next dangerous spot is the Gulf of Guinea—the entry point to trade with Nigeria which is Africa's leading oil producer. Although US dependence on Nigerian crude oil imports has declined over the years, just a few years ago, the United States imported Nigeria's crude oil of about the same quantity of oil shipped from the Middle East.²⁹

Regrettably, pirates in West Africa—some of which have links to Nigerian militia organizations³⁰—have attacked petroleum tankers to supply the region's fuel black market.³¹ The national oil industry has encountered significant shock: there has been a sharp decline of 600,000 barrels per day on Nigerian oil export between 2006 and 2009.³² In 2015, the financial implication of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea climaxed \$720 million, from which the shipping industry accounts for 60 percent loss.³³ This does not only risks US commercial interests,

²⁴ Nicolas Kasprzyk, "African Parliaments Lead the Continent's Fight Against Weapons of Mass Destruction," Institute for Security Studies, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/africanparliaments-lead-the-continent-fight-against-weapons-ofmass-destruction>.

²⁵ Maritime Security Center, "About MSCHOA and OP ATALANTA," <http://www.mschoa.org/on-shore/about-us>.

²⁶ One Earth Future Foundation, "The Economic Cost of Somali Piracy 2011," 2011, http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/sites/default/files/economic_cost_of_piracy_2011.pdf, 8.

²⁷ "Four American Hostages Killed by Somali Pirates," February 2, 2011, NBC News, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/41715530/ns/world_news-africa/t-four-american-hostages-killed-somalipirates/#.WKPe1hJ95-V.

²⁸ The World Bank Group, "Ending Somali Piracy Will Need OnShore Solutions and International Support to Rebuild Somalia," April 11, 2013, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/pressrelease/2013/04/11/ending-somali-piracy-will-need-on-shore-solutions-and-international-support-to-rebuild-somalia>.

²⁹ Corey Flintoff, "Where Does America Get Oil? You May Be Surprised," NPR, April 12, 2012, <http://www.npr.org/2012/04/11/150444802/where-does-america-get-oil-youmay-be-surprised>.

³⁰ Jonathan Saul, "West Africa Pirates Switch to Kidnapping Crew as Oil Fetches Less," Reuters, May 3, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-westafrica-piracy-idUSKCN0XU1OR>.

³¹ UNODC, "Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment," February 2013, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West_Africa_TOCTA_2013_EN.pdf, 45.

³² "Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea: A Clear and Present Danger," Economist, April 16, 2009, <http://www.economist.com/node/13496711>.

³³ Oceans Beyond Piracy, "The State of Maritime Piracy 2015: Assessing the Economic and Human Cost," <http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/reports/sop2015/summary>

but oil theft (through piracy and other illicit activities) will also negatively impact the region and impedes the worldwide supply of petroleum products.³⁴

As a result of the active presence of the United States, the EU, NATO, and other security forces, 2012 to early 2017 recorded a huge decline in activities of pirates in the Somali territorial waters. Nevertheless, the forces fueling piracy, i.e. poverty, poor governance, and conflict are still evident. In fact, because of declined security measures, drought, and continuous political disorder, Somali pirates were in one month able to seize four ships in early 2017. Unfortunately, even with the presence of AFRICOM in the Gulf of Guinea, to facilitate maritime security training and equipment, the situation there is equally tense. Even though there had been a decline in oil theft as a result of deterioration in oil prices, incidents of kidnapping-for-ransom³⁵ and attacks on ships are growing³⁶ The Gulf of Guinea is labeled "the world's most dangerous region for sailors" because of this.³⁷ The failure of bringing the threat of Somali piracy to an end upon all the huge cost of international naval response,³⁸ emphasizes the significance of partnership with African partners not just to address immediate piracy threats and "develop strategies for regional maritime security, but also to create other means of survival that can reinforce local economies in a lawful and sustainable means."³⁹

Terrorism

Terrorist organizations based in Africa are committing serious atrocities and directly posing threat to United States interests and its allies. In 2015 alone, the number of lives claimed by terrorist attacks in Africa was the same as (if not higher than) the number of people killed by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in the Middle East.⁴⁰ Not to over-emphasize the fact that most of this misfortune has befallen Africans; these terrorist organizations also pose a serious threat to the U.S interests and its citizens at home and abroad.

Most of these Africa-based groups uphold close ties with Anti- US organizations like ISIS and al-Qaeda, which masterminded the bombings of two US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. Quite recently, it has been established that there are terrorist groups in the Sahel with close links to al-Qaeda.⁴¹ ISIS has also been looking for an opportunity to expand its base in Africa even though it is operational in eight countries in the continent (of which three are in North Africa),⁴² and the Nigeria-based Boko Haram which has pledged allegiance since

³⁴ As of 2013, "more than 30 percent of US oil and 40 percent of Europe's oil passes through the Gulf and is vulnerable to West African piracy." "Shippers Raise Alarm Over Oil Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea," Voice of America, October 14, 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/a/shippers-raise-alarm-over-piracy-in-gulf-of-guinea/1769278.html>.

³⁵ "Crew Kidnappings Reach Decade High in 2016," World Maritime News, January 20, 2017, <http://worldmaritimeweb.com/archives/210082/crew-kidnappings-reach-decade-high-in-2016/>

³⁶ Agence France-Presse, "US Warns of Growing Piracy Risk-Off West Africa," Inquirer.Net, February 15, 2017, <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/871648/US-warns-of-growing-piracy-risk-off-westafrica>

³⁷ "The State of Maritime Piracy 2015," Oceans Beyond Piracy

³⁸ Oceans Beyond Piracy estimates that, in 2012, government military operations to counter piracy off the coast of Somalia exceeded \$1 billion. See Oceans Beyond Piracy, "The Economic Cost of Somali Piracy 2012," http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/sites/default/files/ecop2012final_2.pdf. It is also estimated that foreign naval vessels would sometimes spend \$1 million per day on fuel costs while patrolling the Somali coast. Gettleman, "Somali Pirates Attack, Raising Fears That a Menace Is Back," <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/04/world/africa/somali-pirates.html>.

³⁹ Why Africa Matters to US National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 P11.

⁴⁰ This includes sub-Saharan and North Africa. See Nicole Gaouette, "US official: Terror Kills as Many or More in Africa than Mideast," CNN, May 10, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/05/10/politics/africa-terror-isis-boko-haram/>.

⁴¹ "African Leaders Agree to New Joint Counter-Terrorism Force," France 24, last updated on February 6, 2017, <http://www.france24.com/en/20170206-african-leaders-agree-new-jointcounter-terrorism-force>. See also Jennifer G. Cooke, Thomas M. Sanderson, J. Caleb Johnson, and Benjamin Hubner, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/militancy-and-arc-instability>, 16-19; Reuters, "Mali Jihadist Groups Announce they Will Merge: Report," March 2, 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-malisedsecurity-idUSKBN1692MY>

⁴² William Arkin, Robert Windrem, and Cynthia McFadden, "New Counterterrorism 'Heat Map' Shows ISIS Branches Spreading Worldwide."

Jennifer G. Cooke et al., "Military and the Arc of Instability," 3.

2015.⁴³ As one time commander of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) states, “Terrorists with allegiances to multiple groups are expanding their collaboration in recruitment, financing, training, and operations, both within Africa and trans-regionally.”⁴⁴

African-based terrorist groups such as Boko Haram—the second most deadly terrorist organization in the world⁴⁵—and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) promotes dangerous anti-American and anti-Western ideologies. Both have been accountable for attacking establishments frequented by Westerners, including attacks by Boko Haram on United Nations (UN) building in Nigeria (2011), and by Africa-based al-Qaeda affiliates on hotels in Mali (2015), Burkina Faso (2016), and Côte d'Ivoire (2016). AQIM made more than \$90 million by taking hostage of Europeans for ransom from 2008-2014.⁴⁶ Moreover, al-Shabaab, an affiliate of al-Qaeda, has conducted various attacks in East Africa, including at a restaurant and rugby club in Uganda (2010) and the Westgate Mall in Kenya (2013).

Activities of terrorist groups do not just pose localized threats: their anti-American messages get to potential audiences far and wide, including beyond Africa and in the United States and Europe. Al-Shabaab raises part of its funds and recruits members from US residents and citizens (including among the approximately 150,000 strong Somali immigrant community in the United States⁴⁷), and encourage attacks on US homeland⁴⁸

In 2009, the “Underwear Bomber,” Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab from Nigeria, was motivated by al-Qaeda to attempt to explode a passenger plane heading for the United States.⁴⁹

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

In some situations, the threats are so alarming that the United States has often been left with no alternative but to take direct action, which is to a greater degree was facilitated by having a physical presence in Africa and utilizing key infrastructures. A critical example is Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, which is quintessential to US counterterrorism strategy on the continent and in the Middle East, for instance, had undertaken operations against al-Shabaab in Somalia and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen.

However, it takes motivation and a strong partnership for counterterrorism actions to yield dividends. The United States could not do it unilaterally even if it so desires—it would be an ill-advised adventure

⁴³ Jennifer G. Cooke et al., “Military and the Arc of Instability,” 3.

⁴⁴ General David M. Rodriguez, “United States Africa Command 2015 Posture Statement,” Senate Armed Services Committee, <http://www.africom.mil/media-room/document/25285/usafricom-posture-statement-2015>

⁴⁵ Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2016, 16.

⁴⁶ Rukmini Callimachi, “Paying Ransoms, Europe Bankrolls Qaeda Terror,” New York Times, July 29, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/30/world/africa/ransoming-citizens-Europe-becomes-al-qaedas-patron.html>

⁴⁷ Phillip Connor and Jens Manuel Krogstad, “5 Facts About the Global Somali Diaspora,” Pew Research Center, June 1, 2016, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/01/5-factsabout-the-global-somali-diaspora/>.

⁴⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, “San Diego Jury Convicts Four Somali Immigrants of Providing Support to Foreign Terrorists: Defendants Sent Money to al Shabaab in Somalia,” February 22, 2013, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/sandiego/press-releases/2013/san-diego-jury-convicts-four-somaliimmigrants-of-providing-support-to-foreign-terrorists>. See also Kristina Davis, “SD Somalis Sent to Prison in Terrorism Case,” The San Diego Union-Tribune, November 18, 2013, <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-somalia-prison-sentencemoalin-terrorist-2013nov18-story.html>.

⁴⁹ Anti-Defamation League, “Al Shabaab’s American Recruits,” February 2013, <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/combating-hate/al-shabaabs-americanrecruits.pdf>, 4-5.

and counterproductive. Besides direct military intervention, the United States must invest in bolstering partners' aptitude to meet head-on and prevent regional threats even before they can blow out of proportion and undermine US interests overseas, and especially at home. This means establishing decisive security cooperation and support to boost African partner capacity, which is not an easy task at all. Building a sustainable security relationship depends on strong diplomacy and creating partnerships across military, intelligence, law enforcement and also confronting issues of human rights to guarantee conformity to US laws as in the case of Kenya and Nigeria (e.g., Leahy human rights vetting of foreign security forces) that allowed the U.S to cease providing of special support to particular divisions or persons. Contrarily, terminating short-term counterterrorism strategies from a deeper partnership that includes security and other support to African countries could boomerang if partner states lack the required will or aptitude to pursue broad and effective strategies.

For that reason, the United States has augmented its security partnerships in Africa. In 2015, AFRICOM carried out seventy-five joint operations, twelve high profile joint operations, and four hundred security cooperation exercises. Also, promoting African-led interventions (as in the case of Somalia and the Lake Chad Basin region) can improve effectiveness and gives a more sense of legitimacy to military operations in countering terrorist activities that may require effective regional solutions. Strengthening African forces in handling conflicts and undertaking counterterrorism operations has minimized the presence of US military on the ground, "saving American lives in the process".⁵⁰

The fight against terrorism does not only involve strong partnership, but it also requires a comprehensive approach to tackle issues undermining development and thwart extremism. Security apparatus is indispensable but not enough to deal with and/or prevent terrorism; the employment of conventional strategies like intelligence gathering, policing of borders and military missions will not effectively shield US interests. On the contrary, it is but wise to first and foremost address underlying structural challenges that force individuals to radicalization and fuel aggression to effectively countering violent extremism. As President George W. Bush states in his Freedom Agenda, "It is in the best interests of our Nation to alleviate the despair that can allow extremism to take hold by fighting hunger and disease, supporting basic education initiatives and advancing global economic development."⁵¹

Governments in African must put through forward-looking policies, as well as democratic values and economic reforms to utilize national resources prudently, tackle corruption, and mend investment atmosphere to entice private capital.⁵² Otherwise, injudicious policy and limited opportunities for youth empowerment for short-term political advantage will catalyze disgruntlement, extremism, and civil unrest.

In a dismal state of affairs, disgruntled youths can be influenced by a meager sum of money to join extremist organizations. Newly recruited members of extremist groups earn less than \$600.⁵³ Recent findings suggest that financial incentives-(not religion) are a key vehicle that drives an individual to Boko Haram membership.⁵⁴ This is an indication that aside all other complex factors that trigger radicalization, tackling poverty and issues of

⁵⁰ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security; Grant T. Harris, May 2017 P4-5

⁵¹ The White House, Fact Sheet: President Bush's Freedom Agenda Helped Protect the American People, (Washington, DC: TheWhiteHouse, January 12, 2009), <https://georgewbushwhitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/freedomagenda/>.

⁵² International Monetary Fund, Regional Economic Outlook-Sub-Saharan Africa, 30.

⁵³ Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2016, 84. As President Obama pointed out in 2015, "poverty alone does not cause a person to become a terrorist... But when people -- especially young people -- feel entirely trapped in impoverished communities, where there is no order and no path for advancement, where there are no educational opportunities, where there are no ways to support families, and no escape from injustice and the humiliations of corruption -- that feeds instability and disorder, and makes those communities ripe for extremist recruitment." "Remarks by the President at the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism," The White House, February 19, 2015, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/19/remarks-presidentsummit-countering-violent-extremism-february-19-2015>.

⁵⁴ Ewi and Salifu, "Money Talks," 3-6.

governance remains fundamental to addressing the root causes of terrorism. This also indicates that, in the absence of better alternatives, the membership of terrorist groups will continue to swell up. According to General Thomas D. Waldhauser, former AFRICOM commander, for youths in African joining, an extremist organization is a matter of employment rather than ideology. Thus he testified before Congress, saying, "We have got to find a way to get at education, health care, hopelessness, livelihood, and the like..." for the reason that "we cannot kill our way to victory here."⁵⁵

For Grant T. Harris (May 2017 p6), "Viewing Africa only through the soda straw of security tools and direct action would impede sustainable solutions, pervert Washington's choice of partners, and prevent the United States from being effective in eliminating threats to its interests". Creating Partnerships with African governments is quintessential, not only because it guarantees jobs and creates opportunities for a growing youth population, but also to join forces with governments to tackle corruption and address policies that fuel grievances and promote radicalization.⁵⁶

Health Threats

Even with great improvement in medical science, infectious diseases can swiftly traverse oceans and borders. Containing such threats depends heavily on capable partners with strong and effective institutions to detect and prevent an outbreak before it spreads. Building these capacities involves significant funding and proper coordination to build up strong early warning systems and healthcare facilities. This is by far a better option to risking the lives of Americans, resorting to costly emergency responses, and long-lasting economic shock with destabilizing effects.⁵⁷

To begin with, the US government has been critical in minimizing the direct and indirect effects of devastating epidemics in Africa. President George W. Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) helped saved up to 740,000 lives within four years.⁵⁸ During the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, intervention by the US and its allies—including military involvement—helped evade "a worst-case scenario" of 1.4 million cases in the space of four months.⁵⁹ Prompt response to the outbreak reduced the probability of Americans getting infected and minimized the likelihood of a viral mutation; had that occurred, the risks to the world's population would have been huge.⁶⁰

Secondly, the United States cannot detach itself in the face of such health emergencies. During the Ebola outbreak, about 3,000—6,000 passengers a week were migrating between West Africa and the United States.⁶¹ The United States would have been very much likely to be directly affected if the Ebola virus was widespread in

⁵⁵ United States Central Command and United States Africa Command," United States Senate Committee on Armed Services.

⁵⁶ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p6

⁵⁷ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p7

⁵⁸ Ruthann Richter, "740,000 Lives Saved: Study Documents Benefits of AIDS Relief Program," Stanford Medicine News Center, May 15, 2012, <https://med.stanford.edu/news/allnews/2012/05/740000-lives-saved-study-documents-benefitsof-aids-relief-program.html>.

⁵⁹ Lena H. Sun, Brady Dennis, and Joel Achenbach, "CDC: Ebola Could Infect 1.4 Million in Liberia and Sierra Leone by End of January," Washington Post, September 23, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/cdc-ebola-couldinfect-14-million-in-west-africa-by-end-of-january-if-trendscontinue/2014/09/23/fc260920-4317-11e4-9a15-137aa0153527_story.html?utm_term=.749ebbc8bf60.

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

⁶¹ Brittany Water, "Ebola and US National Security," International Policy Digest, November 7, 2014, <https://intpolicydigest.org/2014/11/07/ebola-and-us-national-security/>.

a country like Nigeria with higher migration and business ties with the United States. Border closure cannot serve as a practical response, as demonstrated by unsuccessful travel restrictions to combat the spread of H1N1 influenza in 2009.⁶²

The risk of weaponizing a highly communicable disease for bioterrorism purposes was evident. Although the chances of this happening with Ebola is minimal owing to logistical and financial challenges, that has not prevented state and non-state actors from trying in the past,⁶³ and the chances that such a threat could originate from Africa should not be ignored.

Furthermore, epidemics can have long term undermining effects that threaten US security. PEPFAR was founded on the realization that the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS would undermine economic growth, hinder good governance, and diminish the size and productivity of the labor force— factors that breed instability and conflict.⁶⁴ Although the probability of Americans contracting the Ebola virus is minimal, President Obama was serious that if infections go beyond control it could result in panic and cause a devastating effect on the economy of affected States in Africa, with worldwide security implications.⁶⁵

Thirdly, there is the possibility for new and/or more frequent outbreaks in the future, in part as a result of rising and urbanizing populations in Africa and other continents, and the high occurrence of human to-animal contacts. "Emerging diseases against which humans have no preexisting immunity or effective therapies pose significant risks of becoming pandemics," advised one-time Director of National Intelligence James Clapper.⁶⁶

Furthermore, weak national health systems in Africa, in general, intensify the probability that a localized illness will develop into a pandemic. For example, in contrast with countries on other continents, African states most likely lack pandemic preparedness plans for avian influenza, which is especially threatening regarding recent outbreaks of "highly pathogenic" "strains that have to affect millions of birds across Europe, Asia, and Africa".⁶⁷ If these strain contracted by humans, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) warns, "an influenza pandemic could result, with potentially high rates of illness and death worldwide."⁶⁸

⁶² See Paolo Bajardi et al. "Human Mobility Networks, Travel Restrictions, and the Global Spread of 2009 H1N1 Pandemic," PLOS, <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0016591#pone.0016591.s001>; and see "No rationale for travel restrictions," World Health Organization, May 1, 2009, http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/public_health/travel_advice/en/. The study concludes that it "is unlikely that given the ever-increasing mobility of people travel restrictions could be used effectively in a future pandemic event." 36 Dina Fine Maron, "Weaponized Ebola: Is It a Bioterror Threat?" Scientific American, September 25, 2014, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/weaponized-ebola-is-it-really-abioterror-threat/>.

⁶³ Dina Fine Maron, "Weaponized Ebola: Is It Really a Bioterror Threat?" Scientific American, September 25, 2014, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/weaponized-ebola-is-it-really-abioterror-threat/>.

⁶⁴ Tom Daschle and Bill Frist, "The Case for Strategic Health Diplomacy: A Study of PEPFAR," Bipartisan Policy Center, November 2015, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/the-casefor-strategic-health-diplomacy-a-study-of-pepfar/>. Charles Snyder, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in 2004, explained: "The continent's crises and conflicts, as well as the brutal HIV/AIDS pandemic, breed instability, which opens new safe harbors for our enemies." "Remarks by Charles Snyder," The American Enterprise Institute, April 13, 2004, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/31950.htm>.

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

⁶⁶ James R. Clapper, "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," Senate Armed Services Committee, February 9, 2016, https://fas.org/irp/congress/2016_hr/020916sasc.pdf, 15.

⁶⁷ Jeanette Dawa, "Bird Flu in Uganda Highlights Gaps in Africa's Plans to Manage Pandemics," The Conversation, February 6, 2017, <http://theconversation.com/bird-flu-in-uganda-highlights-gaps-in-africa's-plans-to-manage-pandemics-71757>.

⁶⁸ "First Human Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Virus Infection Reported in Americas," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 8, 2014, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/news/first-human-h5n1-americas.htm>.

IV. Solutions To Us Security Threats Originating From Africa

There are four (4) (but crucial) ways by which the United States can strengthen its security interest in Africa. These four key areas when neglected are the very sources from which US security threat emanates from Africa.

(i) Promoting good governance and human rights

Promoting good governance and human rights in Africa is not only crucial in advancing human dignity, but it also has multiple paybacks. Development such as-strengthening the rule of law helps to create a conducive and stable atmosphere for African and US businesses and to discourage extreme radicalization.⁶⁹ More so, countries that practice the US' values of democracy and human rights appear to be better partners in advancing universal objectives like free trade and information sharing.

(i) Preventing Atrocities and Promoting stability

Preventing atrocities is not just an end in itself, it also brings along varieties of secondary benefits. E.g., reduction of political and economic instability, and maintaining worldwide confidence in American hegemony. This is what President Obama has to say, "Our security is affected when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods. America's reputation suffers, and our ability to bring about change is constrained when we are perceived as idle in the face of mass atrocities and genocide."⁷⁰ For instance, it was a foreign policy catastrophe on the US' part for failing to respond swiftly during the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

Robust economic development and good governance practices are the only long-term solution to transnational threats. The risk factors are evident in the demographic shifts in Africa. Taking into account the overwhelmingly young population of the continent (with eighteen years being the average age), leaders of African states must create eighteen million employment annually.⁷¹

This is an impressively difficult task. Thus, the US' investment and support are quintessential. And if achieved, on one hand, would be a vehicle for a robust economic boom. On the other hand, failure would generate a huge number of young people without opportunities that are prone to join radical groups, consequently snowballing the threat of terror confronting the US and its European allies. With all its complexities, there are different magnetic forces to radicalization. According to the latest findings, the financial inducement is the major vehicle to Boko Haram membership as compared to religion.⁷²

(ii) Investing in Development and Creating Economic Opportunities

Investment in development projects creates deep inroads to promote US values and can also directly impact on US security. E.g., the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has been designated as the "translation of US taxpayer dollars into compassion and hope for those in despair and dying across the globe."⁷³

⁶⁹ As President Obama stated, "if the dignity of the individual is upheld across Africa, then I believe Americans will be freer as well because I believe that none of us are fully free when others in the human family remain shackled by poverty or disease or oppression. ... June 30, 2013, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/30/remarks-president-obamauniversity-cape-town>. See also Why Africa Matters to US National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p20

⁷⁰ The White House, Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities (Washington, DC: The White House, 2011), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/04/presidential-study-directive-mass-atrocities>.

⁷¹ International Monetary Fund, Regional Economic Outlook-SubSaharan Africa Navigating Headwinds, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2015/afr/eng/pdf/sreo0415.pdf>, 30.

⁷² Martin Ewi and Uyo Salifu, "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram," Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief 98 (2017) <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/policybrief98.pdf>, 4.

⁷³ Embassy of the United States in Tanzania, "The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)," <https://tanzania.usembassy.gov/pepfartz.html>. For additional background on how investments in health, in

So far, apart from saving millions of lives, PEPFAR also presented important "secondary effects" on social and economic pointers, the stability of states, and cultivating positive public opinion toward the United States in specific states.⁷⁴ Investments in the form of US foreign aid are generally viewed as crucial tools to avert conflict and discouraging the need to risk the lives of American soldiers,⁷⁵ "and they also cost much less than most Americans realize".⁷⁶

Soon, the strength of America's economy will, in one way or the other, be contingent on the interest and volume of US businesses that operate in Africa, as well as the willingness of African consumers to procure US goods and services. The demographic and economic developments of the region make this apparent. Thirty (30) years from now, a quarter of the world's population will be located in sub-Saharan and North Africa, of which a billion of these will be under the age of eighteen and set to join the labor force. Establishing businesses and job opportunities will be key to deterring youth from engaging in radicalization and perilous journeys to EU countries and the US.

Even though Africa only accounts for as low as 3 percent of global GDP, it is becoming progressively linked to the global economy. Also, the continent is the "last frontier of emerging markets," having huge potential for amplified consumption. Africa's growing young and urbanizing population will be decisive in shaping global markets in the coming years.

It is, therefore, time for the United States to step up on its economic engagement with African states. This requires sustained US government determination to promote US economic competitiveness in these emerging markets. Undertaking a long-term strategy to advance US investment can promote the region as well as American employment. It can also help answer the question of why do Africans need to embark on perilous journeys to seek job opportunities elsewhere.

To end with, commercial links affect political influence. "By missing out economically, the United States is also missing opportunities to strengthen political relationships"—a trajectory China and others are making deep-inroads on. Differently put, sluggish US involvement knocks back American companies and weakens America's global influence, to the advantage of competitors (like China, Turkey, Russia, etc.) whose interests may not be parallel with those of the United States.⁷⁷

(iii) Providing Humanitarian Assistance

Providing humanitarian support is analogous to the US' spirit of benevolence. The US has proven to be the leading provider of humanitarian support to Africa.⁷⁸ Thus, reports from the media about mass suffering often

particular, relate to US values and national security, see Institute of Medicine, *The US Commitment to Global Health: Recommendations for the New Administration* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2009), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK32621/>.

⁷⁴ Tom Daschle and Bill Frist, *The Case for Strategic Health Diplomacy: A Study of PEPFAR*, 4.

⁷⁵ Dan Lamothe, "Retired Generals Cite Past Comments from Mattis While Opposing Trump's Proposed Foreign Aid Cuts," *Washington Post*, February 27, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/02/27/retiredgenerals-cite-past-comments-from-mattis-while-opposingtrumps-proposed-foreign-aid-cuts/?utm_term=.1275f576df14.

⁷⁶ Many Americans overestimate how much of the federal budget is spent on foreign aid, with the average estimate being 25 percent; the actual proportion is 1 percent or less. See Mollyann Brodie, Bianca DiJulio, and Jamie Firth, *Data Note: Americans' Views On The US Role In Global Health* (Washington, DC: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2015), <http://kff.org/globalhealth-policy/poll-finding/data-note-americans-views-on-the-u-s-role-in-global-health/>.

⁷⁷ *Why Africa Matters to Us National Security* Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p15-16

⁷⁸ Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development, *Development Aid at a Glance: Statistics by Region – Africa* (Paris: OECD, 2015), <https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/2%20Africa%20-%20Development%20Aid%20at%20a%20Glance%202015.pdf>, 2.

provoke a public reaction that sometimes results in pleas for US intervention.⁷⁹ Persistent public outcry elicits debate for prompt and decisive involvement to "save lives, alleviate suffering, and minimize the economic costs of conflict, disasters, and displacement",⁸⁰ and to avert crises (and expenses) escalation.

Humanitarian support, though a secondary matter, produces goodwill that reinforces US global power and keeps America safer. For example, the prompt and benevolent intervention to the 2004 tsunami stimulated two-thirds of Indonesians to perceive the United States more positively—"including among self-identified supporters of Osama bin Laden".⁸¹

Promoting stability, building capacity, and empowering African states to develop will strengthen US security and creates inroads leading to lasting partnerships built on mutual respect and mutual self-interest. By this way, African partners will become stronger, able and/or willing to take more responsibility in helping address global crises.⁸²

(iv) Promote the Capacity of African Government to Protect Their Territory

African states need to demonstrate the will power and capability required of US partners to defend their territorial jurisdiction from transnational threats. To propel this, it requires US investment in the economic growth of Africa. However, for Governments in Africa to demonstrate the will power, it is quintessential they are treated as genuine partners and with due respect by the United States. Also, the US must share Africa's interests and invests in the future of the continent. For African governments to demonstrate capability, unflinching support is needed to competently combat threats, especially by means consistent with US standards. There, promoting genuine partnerships is by extension, ushering economic growth and development in African. According to Grant T. Harris, 'transactional relationships' will never produce the "strong and deep partnerships" required to protect the interests of the US. He further states that the United States is not "the only possible partner for African governments"; other great nations with diverse interests are contending for power and "offering investment, military cooperation, and assistance".

Transcending transnational threats, however, is a vast array of issues at stake. United States' effort to dominate Africa's growing markets; galvanizing political support for an international agenda that promotes US interests and values; and upholding a "leadership that comes from being generous and principled" functional to "protect innocent people from natural and manmade disasters".

V. Propagating An International Order That Benefits The United States

United States' hegemonic status in the current international order should not be overemphasized. It takes the spread of American values overseas for the U.S global supremacy to be preserved. Moreover, "cultivating and deepening" relations with African countries is key for the United States to preserve its global status. The 2015 U.S National Security Strategy vividly outlined these goals, which highlights the quest to "advance an international order that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges," specifically by cooperating with partners to "reinforce and update the rules of the road, norms, and

⁷⁹ Dan Henk, "US National Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Parameters*, Winter 1997-98, 92-107, <http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/Articles/97winter/henk.htm>.

⁸⁰ US Department of State, Strategic Goal 5: Providing Humanitarian Assistance (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2007), <https://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2007/html/82955.htm>.

⁸¹ Ken Ballen and David Caprara, "Return on American Humanitarian Aid: They Like Us," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 10, 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2012/1210/Return-on-American-humanitarian-aid-They-like-us>. A similarly positive effect was observed among Pakistanis following US assistance to the victims of the 2005 earthquake. See Ken Ballen and David Caprara, *Impacts of Malaria Interventions and Their Potential Additional Humanitarian Benefits in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2012), <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/malaria-africa-caprara.pdf>, 9.

⁸² Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p21

institutions that are foundational to peace, prosperity, and human dignity in the 21st century" and by "strengthening and growing our global alliances and partnerships, forging diverse coalitions, and leading at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations."⁸³

Africa, which comprises fifty-four nation-states with a population of over a billion people, has a decisive role to play in shaping the world order in a way that can influence the role and vitality of American leadership. African states are vital to US efforts to (1) advance vital interests in international organizations and uphold sanctions and/or regimes; (2) advance U.S values abroad, and (3) exert global influence and leadership.⁸⁴

1. Advancing Global Priorities

For the US to succeed in advancing a myriad of cross-cutting national security priorities, cooperation with African countries and organizations must be seen as a quintessential aspect. A genuine partnership and engagement with African states guarantee easy subscription to US policies, while disconnection with African countries poses barriers to crucial priorities.

To start with, African states formed about a quarter of the United Nations member states, which consequently represent the biggest regional bloc in most international fora. Therefore, winning the votes of African states can be crucial for the advancement of US interests at the international stage on matters relating to food security, nuclear nonproliferation, or backing Israel. It is crystal clear that the United States seriously depends on the United Nations to advance measures of counterterrorism against organizations like ISIS and al-Qaeda, mainly through enhanced partnership (e.g., on sanctions and efforts to track and cut off terrorist financing).⁸⁵ The votes of African states at the UN Security Council are crucial and can impact on a plethora of US priorities such as sanctions against Iran and North Korea.

Secondly, the African Union is a highly important voice on African as well as global matters that can support or impede US goals. For example, in 2011, the AU was averse to foreign military intervention in Libya as opposed to plans by the United States and NATO allies effort through the UN Security Council.⁸⁶ This hindered US diplomatic standing with African countries and prompted hold-back on political support for US actions. Another example was in 2013 when President Bashar al-Assad's called on the AU to stand with him in opposing a UN-backed military intervention in Syria—a state that holds "African Union observer status".⁸⁷

Furthermore, AU member countries are becoming more advanced in coordinating their diplomatic standpoints in international fora,⁸⁸ This indicates the level at which Africa exercise' regional power in international organizations. Although the United States has been outstanding in assisting the AU, major contenders are dramatically improving relations with AU. For instance, China funded the construction of the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa to the tune of \$200 million.

⁸³ The White House, Fact Sheet: The 2015 National Security Strategy (Washington, DC: The White House, 2015), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/06/fact-sheet-2015-national-security-strategy>.

⁸⁴ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p19

⁸⁵ Eric Rosand, "Why Trump Needs the United Nations," The Brookings Institution, January 11, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/01/11/why-trump-needs-the-united-nations/>.

⁸⁶ "AU Opposes Foreign Military Intervention in Libya," SAnews, March 21, 2011, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/africa/au-opposesforeign-military-intervention-libya>. See Alex De Waal, "The African Union and the Libya Conflict of 2011," World Peace Foundation, December 19, 2012, <https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2012/12/19/the-african-union-and-the-libyaconflict-of-2011/>.

⁸⁷ Anita Powell, "South Africa Opposes Syria Strikes," VOA, August 29, 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/a/south-africajacob-zuma-opposed-to-US-international-military-strikes-onsyria/1739566.html>.

⁸⁸ Reuben Brigety, "Trump's Deafening Silence on Africa," Foreign Policy, February 15, 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/15/trumps-deafening-silence-on-africa/>.

Thirdly, winning AU's support is crucial to enforce sanctions and politically dissociate states and groups that are a threat to US national security. E.g., North Korea largely depends on African countries, like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia, and Eritrea, to sell arms and sustain military relationships, contrary to UN sanctions.⁸⁹ These trade provide a huge source of money to Pyongyang's regime, which is needed to "advance its weapons of mass destruction and nuclear programs". Also, Uganda has challenged US sanctions by doing business with a Russian corporation.⁹⁰

A fourth instance is; African states can directly influence the state of affairs in the Middle East which also impacts US interests in the region. The geographic proximity, historic, and socio-economic, linkages that exist between the two regions are inseparable. This is demonstrated in the Yemeni conflict between Saudi-backed government forces and Iran-backed Houthi rebels, mainly as the Saudi led coalition called on specific African countries to pledge their "political support, troop contributions, and basing access". As Alex Rondos explains, "a pattern of strategic realignments by countries in the Horn with players in the Gulf is affecting their domestic politics, disturbing relations among them, and creating entirely new challenges for the Horn of Africa—and by extension in the Red Sea region."⁹¹ Because of its security priorities in the Middle East, the United States must be very active and be a part of every development in the region. Also, disregarding the influence Africa has in the Middle East would be ill-advised.⁹²

2. Diffusing US Values

Advancing the principles of human rights, good governance, and peace are the fundamentals of US foreign policy. According to former US Secretary of States, Condoleezza Rice: "For the United States, supporting international development is more than just an expression of our compassion. It is a vital investment in the free, prosperous, and peaceful international order that fundamentally serves our national interest."⁹³

3. Advancing US Global Leadership

It is justifiable to say the US' influence in Africa is rapidly retrogressing as compared to other global actors. With China at the top, states like Russia, India, Turkey, Iran, Japan, and the EU are progressively creating inroads to strengthen their relations with the region. A decline in influence equals to decline in global leadership and global worth. This potential decline should rejuvenate US commitment to establish firm "economic-based ties" with Africa, taking into consideration "the added value of soft power".⁹⁴

Rivalry with China in Africa should be seen as a top concern for the US. For over two decades now China's presence in the region has developed exponentially. Records state that between 2000 and 2011, China has

⁸⁹ Salem Solomon, "Sanctioned and Shunned, North Korea Finds Arms Deals in Africa," VOA, March 22, 2017, <http://www.voanews.com/a/sanctioned-and-shunned-north-korea-findsarms-deals-in-africa/3777262.html>. See also Oskar Nkala, "Namibia Confirms North Korean-Built Arms and Ammunition," Defense News, March 17, 2016, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/2016/03/17/namibia-north-koreanarms-ammunition-factory/81902650/>.

⁹⁰ Caroline Hellyer, "Russia Returns to Africa Amid Increasing Isolation," Al Jazeera, March 10, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/russia-returns-africaincreasing-isolation-150305071828897.html>.

⁹¹ Alexander Rondos, "The Horn of Africa: Its Strategic Importance for Europe, the Gulf States, and Beyond," Horizons no. 6, 2016, <http://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2016--issue-no-6/the-horn-of-africa--its-strategic-importance-for-europe-the-gulf-states-and-beyond>, 155.

⁹² Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p19-20

⁹³ FPI Analysis: Foreign Aid Advances US Security, Prosperity, and Global Leadership (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy Initiative, 2013), <http://www.foreignpolicy.org/content/fpi-analysisforeign-aid-advances-US-security-prosperity-and-globalleadership>.

⁹⁴ Why Africa Matters to Us National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p21

invested in development projects worth \$75 billion.⁹⁵ Moreover, in 2015, China guaranteed another \$60 billion for support (including aid, loans, and export credits).⁹⁶ In 2009, China overtook the United States as Africa's leading trading partner. China's investment in Africa has brought critically desired "capital and infrastructure" which promotes the development and bigger global investment to the continent. To protect this investment in Africa, Beijing desires a certain degree of stability in the region. This makes parallel its security interests with those of the US.⁹⁷

According to some analysts, China's investment in Africa doesn't pose a strategic threat to US interests in the region.⁹⁸ They are right to some extent, not all of China's activities in the continent undermine the political, economic, and military influence and/ or interests of the US.

However, to view China's steady involvement in Africa as nonthreatening would be myopic and immature for the following reasons.

First, China's support and investment tactics tend to destroy democratic institutions in Africa. Beijing's "loans-for-resources" model is an intentional show of political neutrality, and "apathetic" as compared to many of the conditions attached to US support, such as human rights, transparency, good governance, labor ethics, and environmental protection policies. China's "no-strings-attached," assistance systematically undermines institutions in Africa.⁹⁹ This model promotes "short-term funding needs", but lays the foundation for long-term national and regional stability challenges.

Second, China's high-visibility commercial diplomacy and development aid translate into public goodwill and political influence that disadvantage US interests. China's investment package contains soft power diplomacies such as cultural exchanges, scholarship programs, and political party training programs.¹⁰⁰

Thirdly, Beijing's media presence across Africa is growing exponentially. To ascertain the rapid expansion of Chinese and Russian television networks in the region, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton remarked that the United States was "engaged in an information war and we are losing that war."¹⁰¹ To note, most Africans have an optimistic view of China's development model as compared to that of the US'.¹⁰²

⁹⁵ This statistic includes North Africa. See Axel Dreher, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Vijaya Ramachandran, Austin Strange, and Michael J. Tierney, *China's Development Finance to Africa: A Media-Based Approach to Data Collection* (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2013), https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/chinese-development-finance-africa_0.pdf.

⁹⁶ The \$60 billion figure includes North Africa. See Noritsu Onishi, "China Pledges \$60 Billion to Aid Africa's Development," *New York Times*, December 4, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/05/world/africa/china-pledges-60-billion-to-aid-africas-development.html?_r=0.

⁹⁷ Why Africa Matters to US National Security Grant T. Harris, May 2017 p22

⁹⁸ RAND Corporation, "China Not a Threat to US National Security Interests in Africa," April 22, 2015, <http://www.rand.org/news/press/2015/04/22.html>.

⁹⁹ John Banks, George Ingram, Mwangi Kimenyi, Steven Rocker, Witney Schneidman, Yun Sun, and Lesley Anne Warner, *Top Five Reasons Why Africa Should Be a Priority for the United States* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2013), https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/04_africa_priority_united_states.pdf, 6-7. See also Fred Dews, "8 Facts about China's Investments in Africa," *The Brookings Institution*, May 20, 2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2014/05/20/8-facts-about-chinas-investmentsin-africa/>.

¹⁰⁰ ICEF Monitor, "Education and the Exercise of Soft Power in China," January 13, 2016, <http://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/education-and-the-exercise-of-soft-power-in-china/>; Yun Sen, "Political Party Training: China's Ideological Push in Africa?" *The Brookings Institution*, July 5, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2016/07/05/political-party-training-chinas-ideological-push-in-africa/>.

¹⁰¹ Gagliardone and Geall, "China in Africa's Media and Telecommunications: Cooperation, Connectivity, and Control," 3. See Hangwei Li and Jacqueline Muna Musiitwa, "China Steps Up Media Charm Offensive Across

VI. Conclusion

Thorough research has made it sacrosanct that U.S' dealings with Africa should not be measured as philanthropic and/or of marginal advantage to the United States and its people, or imperative only to US security with regards to counterterrorism. Africa is connected to an extensive and vast array of US economic and national security interests. A genuine partnership with Africa is significant to advance global priorities. Africa's voting strength in global forums is a force to reckon with. China can maneuver from criticism at multilateral platforms because of Africa's voting strength at international platforms. Between 1998 and 2008 Africa has eleven (11) times disapproved of human rights proposals against China.

The blind assertion among U. S nationals and some foreign policy experts that Africa is fundamentally immaterial to US national security is a deliberate scheme to undermine U. S national security and deepening relations with African states. It is a calculated ploy to tradeoff United States' ambition of maintaining global leadership and the strength to advance an international order.

By all indication, the role of the US in world affairs is guided by a quest to maintain global hegemony, peace and at the same time protecting its national security and economic interests. These are achievable only when threats issues emanating from Africa (in particular) are addressed.

The fact also remains that most of the world's fragile states are found in Africa. According to the Fund for Peace 2017 report, the three most fragile states in the world are African countries— the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Somalia. Apart from these three states, most African countries are also fragile and plagued with “standard measures” of insecurity- endemic corruption, weak institutions, and resource scarcity leading to questions of regime legitimacy, human-rights abuses, public uprising, refugee crises, and power vacuums where non-state actors can thrive. Consequently, these directly or indirectly threaten United States national security.

Therefore, the United States must swiftly respond to these issues not only for moral reasons but also because they can negatively impact on American interests. Stability in sub-Saharan Africa is essential to US national security. The United States must seize opportunities to deepen US-Africa relations and improve US investments in areas such as economic development, governance, health, trade, and youth employment, thus deterring the factors that contribute to instability, membership to extremist groups, violence, perilous journey to the EU States and refugee crises.

Promoting peace, stability, and development reflects how the United States has traditionally perceived itself in the world stage, by projecting its leadership and values that promote human dignity

Transnational threats from the continent of Africa do exist and unrelenting. Africa's patchy democratic and slow economic development and incidents of conflict contribute to an increase in the number of fragile and failed states, which pose a severe threat to U.S national security and interests at home and abroad by creating a haven for terrorist organizations, criminal activities, and a breeding ground for pandemics. A case in point is the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and other hostile groups like Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, etc. are gaining grounds across Africa. Save for a swift international response, the Ebola crisis of 2014 to 2016 would have claimed well over a million lives and caused huge economic damage.

Finally, pockets of conflict, humanitarian crisis, and mass atrocities in the continent place a huge demand on the United States to take action and discharge its notable global leadership responsibility.

Africa,” February 22, 2017, This is Africa, <http://www.thisisafricaonline.com/Analysis/China-stepsup-media-charm-offensive-across-Africa?ct=true>.

¹⁰² Africans polled by Afrobarometer widely perceive China as a positive influence in Africa despite some perceptions that Chinese goods are of poor quality. See Deborah Brautigam, “Afrobarometer: China Wins Favorable Reviews in New Africa Survey,” The China-Africa Research Initiative Blog, October 31, 2016, <http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/2016/10/ afrobarometer-china-wins-favorable.html>.