

May 19, 2021

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Mr. President:

On behalf of the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA), we congratulate you on becoming the 46th President of the United States. As you know, the PAC-DBIA, now in its third term, was established by Executive Order under the Obama-Biden Administration in 2014. We look forward to working with you once again toward our mutual goals of strengthening U.S.-Africa commercial relationships and expanding collaboration to foster resilient economies.

We have regularly observed, as articulated in the opening of our 2020 Keys to Success Report, how the countries of Africa represent significant growth potential and opportunities for American companies. We remain committed to promoting constructive bilateral commercial relationships between the United States and the countries of Africa.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight two critical, high-level recommendations previously made by the PAC-DBIA to the U.S. Government in February 2020.

1. **Host Formal Engagements with African Heads of State:** The Administration, with PAC-DBIA participation and support, should host a formal engagement with African heads of state and begin preparing to host a formal United States-Africa Heads of State Summit. The 2016 U.S.-Africa Business Forum, which was held in New York concurrently with the U.N. General Assembly, drew heads of state from the majority of African nations and generated great enthusiasm and follow-on policy initiatives among participants.
2. **PAC-DBIA Delegation Trip to Africa:** As circumstances allow, the Administration should organize a PAC-DBIA fact-finding trip to Africa, led by the Secretary of Commerce and accompanied by heads of other key agencies critical to the implementation of the Prosper Africa initiative. Demonstrated commitment to and interest in African markets by Cabinet-level officials are essential to building stronger ties and boosting confidence among U.S. businesses in opportunities on the continent.

Additionally, in July 2020, the Council publicly supported the U.S. Government's announcement of its intention to negotiate a bilateral free trade agreement with Kenya and offered to serve as a resource for the negotiating team. We have made other recommendations we believe would have substantial positive impact for U.S. companies doing business in Africa, such as a recommendation to increase the deployment of U.S. Foreign Commercial Service officers across the continent, and to enhance interagency collaboration in creating robust and competitively attractive financial offerings to support key projects in African countries with U.S. company participation. Moreover,

we fully support the U.S. Government's approach to modernize and synchronize its tools to promote increased two-way U.S.-Africa trade and investment, as outlined in the Prosper Africa Roadmap, and we hope our recommendations help guide implementation of this important initiative.

During its current term, the Council has also expanded its focus to incorporate new perspectives into our work, such as promoting commercial opportunities for women entrepreneurs and small businesses, as well as how public and private sectors can partner on driving environmentally friendly technology solutions. We would welcome your Administration's policy and programming support of this effort.

In light of the global Covid-19 crisis of the past year, we have also applied a 'pandemic lens' to reviewing the Council's past work. Previous recommendations on creative financial solutions for spurring U.S.-Africa trade and investment include: blending aid funding and commercial financing; increasing lending to African state-owned banks and enterprises; partnering with U.S. companies to provide capacity building to African governments on finance management, capital market development, and financial sector oversight; better leveraging the role and relationships of the United States with the African Development Bank; and fully reauthorizing the U.S. Export-Import Bank as a tool to support U.S. jobs through exports to Africa and to counter aggressive foreign competition.

Following the sustained period of global travel suspension, interrupted supply chains, and shuttered storefronts due to the pandemic, the above recommendations are especially salient as the United States and African countries seek to recover and rebuild their economies, with aspirations for sustainable health systems and greater food security. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss how the Council might help drive tangible outcomes on these and other ideas.

As your private-sector advisors on doing business in Africa, we look forward to working with you and your Administration to advise how U.S. Government policies and tools can help make U.S. companies the partners of choice in Africa and expand our commercial relationships across the continent.

Sincerely,



Farid Fezoua
Co-Chair



Laura Lane
Co-Chair