

THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON DOING BUSINESS IN AFRICA



PAC-DBIA Ten-Year Review

December 13, 2024

Members of the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA)

Peter Sullivan (Co-Chair), Managing Director and Head of Public Sector for Africa, Citi

Rahama Wright (Co-Chair), Chief Executive Officer, Yeleen Enterprises

Franklin Amoo, Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Baylis Emerging Markets

Jason P.H. Brantley, Vice President of Small Ag & Turf, Deere & Company

Deepak Chopra, President, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman, OSI Systems

Gad Cohen, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, eleQtra Group

Bruce Hanson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Credence ID

Kathryn Karol, Vice President, Global Government and Corporate Affairs, Caterpillar Inc.

Francine Katsoudas, Executive Vice President and Chief People, Policy and Purpose Officer, Cisco Systems, Inc.

William (Bill) Killeen, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman, Acrow

Sami Mainich, President, Dow Africa

John Nevergole, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, ABD Group

Piero Novello, President, Growth and Emerging Markets, Baxter

Alex Okosi, Managing Director, Sub-Saharan Africa, Google

Kwabena Osei-Sarpong, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, RIFE International

Nicole Poindexter, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Energicity Corp

Olivier Puech, President and Executive Vice President, EMEA and Latin America, American Tower Corporation

Justin Siberell, Region President, Europe, Africa, and Middle East, Bechtel Overseas Corporation

Andrew Torre, Regional President for Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East, and Africa, Visa Inc.

Kate Tulenko, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Corvus Health

Patrick Van Der Loo, Regional President for Middle East, Russia, and Africa (MERA), Pfizer

Thierry Wandji, Chief Executive Officer, Cybastion

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This report, other PAC-DBIA recommendations, and additional information can be accessed at www.trade.gov/pac-dbia/

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

Dear Mr. President,

Over the past decade, the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA) has served as a crucial bridge between the U.S. government and American private sector, working to strengthen and expand trade and investment ties between the U.S. and African nations. Since its inception, the PAC-DBIA has spanned three administrations and included participation from businesses ranging in size from small and mid-sized enterprises to large multinational corporations, and from sectors spanning the U.S. economy. Together, these firms offered targeted recommendations to the U.S. government to help American companies remain competitive and well-positioned to participate in Africa's rapidly evolving markets.

In its early years, the PAC-DBIA led efforts such as the Council's first fact-finding trip to Africa, led by then-Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker under the Obama administration, which highlighted emerging opportunities in Rwanda and Nigeria. In 2018, under the Trump administration, the PAC-DBIA traveled to Ethiopia, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana and helped guide the formation of Prosper Africa – the White House initiative to streamline and coordinate U.S. government tools, making it easier for American and African partners to build sustainable commercial relationships. More recently, PAC-DBIA recommendations resulted in high-profile events like the 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, where American and African leaders convened in Washington, D.C., to advance shared economic priorities.

The Council applauds your historic visit to Angola, which underscored U.S. commitment to resilient economic partnerships in Africa. Commercial announcements during your visit reflected PAC-DBIA priorities, including investments in infrastructure, renewable energy, agriculture, and digital services. These projects exemplify how U.S. businesses can drive job creation, strengthen regional value chains, and catalyze sustainable growth.

The enclosed report delves into the 12 primary areas that PAC-DBIA recommendations have addressed, all central to U.S. global competitiveness and future business activity across Africa: Financing; Infrastructure; Technology & the Digital Economy; Agribusiness & Food-Water Security; Energy & Environment; Health; Engagement Mechanisms; Public Procurement; SMEs & Women Entrepreneurs, Trade Facilitation & Supply-Value Chains; Workforce & Skills Development; and the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Over the years, the PAC-DBIA's work has led to concrete gains. U.S. interagency collaboration inspired by the recommendations has facilitated greater access to financing and expanded training programs for African workforces, empowering entrepreneurs – especially women – and fostering reliable supply chains. Advocacy for infrastructure and technology investments has enhanced U.S.-Africa engagement to address policy barriers and boost procurement transparency. In healthcare, Council recommendations have led to actions that have improved delivery systems, bringing life-saving drugs and medical devices from U.S. companies to African partners.

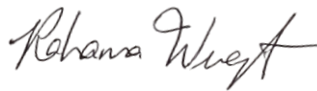
As the PAC-DBIA marks a decade of service, it remains committed to forging long-lasting connections between U.S. and African stakeholders. The Council's future-oriented recommendations aim to reinforce this legacy: encouraging the U.S. government to scale up technical assistance, broaden financing options, and engage more in digital and other infrastructure. These efforts ensure the strong foundation laid continues to yield dividends.

The current PAC-DBIA members appreciate the opportunity to serve as advocates and advisors, and we look forward to continued collaboration between the American private sector and the U.S. government. By building on the momentum generated over the last decade, the PAC-DBIA is a ready mechanism to help chart a path toward a more dynamic and inclusive era of U.S.-Africa commercial engagement.

Sincerely,



Peter Sullivan
Co-Chair



Rahama Wright
Co-Chair

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DEFINITION OF ACRONYMS

PAC-DBIA	President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AU	African Union
AGOA	African Growth & Opportunity Act
CBP	Customs & Border Protection
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DFC	U.S. International Development Finance Corporation
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DTA	Digital Transformation with Africa
ExIm	Export-Import Bank of the United States
FCS	Foreign Commercial Service
GPI	Global Procurement Initiative
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPP	Independent Power Producer
MCC	Millenium Challenge Corporation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSC	National Security Council
OPIC	Overseas Private Investment Corporation
PGI	Partnership for Global Infrastructure & Investment
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
SME	Small & Mid-Sized Enterprise
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
USADF	U.S. African Development Foundation
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USG	U.S. Government
USTDA	U.S. Trade & Development Agency
USTR	Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

LIST OF PAC-DBIA DELIVERABLES 2014 - 2024

	PAC-DBIA Term	DATE	DELIVERABLE (click to view documents)
1	PAC 4.0 2022 - 2024	December 13, 2024	PAC-DBIA 10-Year Review
2		August 28, 2024	Recommendations on Reauthorizing and Strengthening the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)
3		April 13, 2023	Recommendations Report
4	PAC 3.0 2019 - 2021	May 19, 2021	Welcome Letter to President Biden
5		July 28, 2020	Recommendations for Implementing Prosper Africa
6		February 26, 2020	Letter to President Trump Regarding U.S.-Kenya FTA
7			Letter to President Trump
8		Keys to Success Report	
9	PAC 2.0 2016 - 2018	September 26, 2018	Fact-Finding Trip Report and Recommendations
10		April 18, 2018	Recommendations Report
11		February 28, 2017	Letter to President Trump Outlining PAC-DBIA 2.0 Priorities
12		November 29, 2017	Report on Top Issues U.S. Companies Face in Approaching, Competing, and Operating in African Markets
13	PAC 1.0 2014 - 2016	June 29, 2016	Findings from the Trip to Nigeria and Rwanda and Related Recommendations
14		November 19, 2015	Recommendation Report
15		April 8, 2015	Recommendation Report

PAST RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARIES

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Financing was a consistent hurdle impacting the growth of major sectors that increased U.S.-Africa business ties, including infrastructure, technology, and energy as detailed in this overview. PAC-DBIA firms recommended greater USG attention towards helping reduce risk, the cost of capital, and ultimately increase financing for U.S.-Africa trade and investment. The DFC and ExIm are foundational tools to help American firms doing business in African markets and their robust operation was repeatedly emphasized as critical for de-risking and the U.S. to stay competitive with others also operating across the continent. Further, enhancing collaboration across USG agencies was a key recommendation of the PAC-DBIA and was implemented with the creation of a multi-agency Prosper Africa team and the American Catalyst Facility for Development between the MCC and DFC. PAC-DBIA also strongly encouraged expanded collaboration with African institutions such as the AfDB and various capital markets to deepen African capital markets and increase use of African tools and solutions by American firms.

By helping to de-risk projects and leveraging its commercial diplomacy to help American companies compete and win, the USG still has a major role to play. The sustained use of DFC and ExIm remains paramount for American firms to do business in Africa and globally. Therefore, going forward, the PAC-DBIA recommends swift and robust reauthorization of both agencies.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past decade, the USG has made significant strides in addressing the financing needs across various sectors in sub-Saharan Africa, in alignment with the PAC-DBIA's recommendations. A central player in this effort has been DFC, which supports projects led by private-sector entities but can also collaborate with state-owned enterprises when these align with DFC's strategic goals. In addition to its direct investments, DFC has been instrumental in strengthening Africa's financial ecosystem by investing in private equity and infrastructure funds. With over \$640 million allocated to Africa-focused funds, DFC helps local businesses access long-term capital, management skills, and financial expertise, promoting sustainable growth across various sectors.

In 2018, Congress established DFC with strong bipartisan support through the BUILD Act. With the creation of DFC came expanded authorities and tools, including authority to make equity investments, lend foreign currency, and provide technical assistance. BUILD also expanded the clients with whom DFC could work, no longer limiting the organization to work only with those with a U.S. nexus. The BUILD Act legislation authorized DFC until October 2025. Through reauthorization, DFC is now working with Congress to extend DFC's ability to make new investments beyond 2025 and to make changes to improve DFC's ability to advance development and foreign policy priorities.

Furthermore, DFC and the MCC's launch of the American Catalyst Facility for Development in 2020, designed a blended finance tool to mobilize private sector capital for investments that align with both organizations' missions. The program allows MCC to allocate up to 10% of a Compact specifically for DFC to blend in transactions.

Prosper Africa has also played a key role in advancing private sector investment across sectors through blended finance mechanisms. For example, in 2023, Prosper Africa, DFC, and private investors announced the closing of a \$274 million investment that aims to open new opportunities for U.S. investment in Africa's emerging markets and provides an avenue for West Africans to gain greater access to home ownership. Later in 2023, Prosper Africa, USAID, and the State Department provided \$10 million to seed a \$100 million balance sheet under the Green Guarantee Company (GGC), the first privately run guarantee company devoted to catalyzing green bonds and loans in partner countries, focusing on Africa. The GGC is expected to unlock an estimated \$1 billion in new mainstream private capital for climate finance.

ExIm has also been a vital partner, providing financing support through its flexible China Transformational Export Program, which offers competitive financing terms for U.S. exports. ExIm's efforts are complemented

FINANCING

by Power Africa's initiatives to attract institutional investors to the African energy sector, working with U.S. and African pension funds and sovereign wealth funds to unlock capital for clean energy and power infrastructure.

In 2018, USTDA signed an MOU with the AfDB agreeing to partner under USTDA's Global Procurement Initiative: Understanding Best Value (GPI). The MOU signifies the commitment of the AfDB and USTDA to promote best practices in public procurement and capacity building across the African continent through information-sharing, joint planning, and leveraging resources to support the training of procurement officials. Cooperation includes workshops, trainings, new initiatives, international forums and development programs and projects.

In addition, the U.S. Treasury Department has supported broader economic development by working with African governments to strengthen financial systems, improve debt management, and enhance macroeconomic stability. Through its Office of Technical Assistance, Treasury has supported countries like Kenya, Ghana, and Zambia in building more resilient financial systems, making them more attractive for private sector investments across sectors.

Collectively, these efforts reflect a U.S. government strategy focused on leveraging private sector investment to foster sustainable growth in SSA. Through blended finance, technical assistance, and cross-sectoral partnerships, the U.S. is helping to create a more robust financial ecosystem that supports long-term development across a wide range of industries.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Recommendations pertaining to infrastructure have been primarily focused on enhancing collaboration between USG and the U.S. private sector to drive U.S. led infrastructure growth in Africa. While PAC-DBIA 1.0 and PAC-DBIA 4.0 had specific subcommittees dedicated to infrastructure, the focus on infrastructure and the critical role U.S. companies and USG can play in financing and leading the development of sustainable infrastructure has been interwoven through all four terms. Sharpening the finance theme, recommendations have focused on ways that USG can de-risk and catalyze investment specifically into infrastructure. This has included recommendations for the USG to work with African governments to help them put in place legal frameworks and protections to attract investors. Additionally, it has called for greater coordination across USG financing tools such as USTDA, ExIm, and DFC to fund projects from development through financial close. Commercial diplomacy is key to the success of U.S. companies in Africa and the Department of Commerce, PGI, and State Department continuing to prioritize this has been highly encouraged. From PAC-DBIA 1.0 up to PAC-DBIA 4.0 there has also been an emphasis on having a one stop shop for infrastructure development. In PAC-DBIA 4.0 this took the form of PGI and another key recommendation across terms was that infrastructure projects require large investment and the ability of these infrastructure focused entities, such as PGI, to crowd in funding from other governments and international finance organizations with similar goals to the U.S. is critical to success.

Infrastructure continues to be a foundational pillar for economic growth and an area for growth in U.S.-Africa collaboration. Recommendations to enhance public-private partnerships, streamline investment processes, and expand financing mechanisms for large-scale infrastructure projects should remain a priority. These efforts will not only improve connectivity and logistics in line with African government's own plans, but also foster trade, create jobs, and enable greater economic integration across the African continent supporting the U.S.'s strategic goal to grow trade and investment markets for American firms. Africa's role as a major global player will continue to rise and supporting the development of infrastructure, particularly that which cultivates value addition in critical minerals and agricultural products, will help provide a route for these and other products to get from Africa to the U.S. as well as for U.S. goods to get to Africa. This growth in trade will not only result in economic benefits for both the U.S. and Africa but in more secure partner countries on the continent.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The interagency has made significant strides in supporting infrastructure development across sub-Saharan Africa, in alignment with recommendations of the PAC-DBIA. One key example of U.S. investment is the DFC's \$553 million direct loan to refurbish the Lobito Atlantic Railway in Angola, which will upgrade 1,300 km of rail infrastructure, connecting Lobito's port to the Angolan border. This project is part of the larger Lobito Corridor initiative, aimed at reducing transportation costs and improving market access across the region. DFC also participates in investment forums like the PGI Lobito Corridor Private Sector Investor Forum, demonstrating how U.S. financing tools can drive infrastructure growth in Africa.

The MCC has also been instrumental, with over \$1.35 billion in investments in road infrastructure projects across countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, and Zambia. These projects not only improve physical infrastructure but also support key policy reforms for long-term sustainability. Through these efforts, with partnerships across the U.S. government and the private sector, we are fostering sustainable economic growth in Africa, strengthening trade relations, and helping to build the infrastructure necessary to drive the continent's development.

In 2024, to support a more robust pipeline of commercially viable infrastructure projects in Africa that would attract U.S. and other international firms to compete and invest, the U.S. Departments of Commerce and State launched the Technical Assistance for Bankable Infrastructure in Africa (TABI) program. TABI aims to provide technical assistance to support partner governments in sub-Saharan Africa to prioritize, develop, seek financing, and tender high-quality, bankable infrastructure projects. As a complement, also in 2024 and not limited to infrastructure procurement, the Commerce Department's Commercial Law Development Program launched a series of regional workshops in Africa on "Deterrence of Collusive Behavior in Public Procurement".

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

The PAC-DBIA recommendations and reports consistently emphasize the increasing importance of the digital economy for Africa's growth and offer a range of recommendations aimed at fostering a thriving digital ecosystem on the African continent. Recommendations cover various areas including: infrastructure development and internet access; digital skills development; promoting a policy environment that supports investment and avoids discriminatory or prescriptive regulations; digital trade rules that enable data flows and alignment with international standards; and enhanced U.S. government engagement to support U.S. technology uptake in Africa. PAC-DBIA recommendations from earlier terms focused on helping U.S. businesses enter and operate in African markets, while more recent reports emphasize promoting digital trade and digital infrastructure to help facilitate the digital transformation of Africa. Reports from 2015-2017 focused on tools like the "Investor Toolkit" and infrastructure opportunities, while 2018 recommendations emphasized policies for helping African countries better compete in the global digital economy and increasing government-to-government collaboration. In 2020, the reports focused on implementing Prosper Africa and increasing proactive approaches to digital trade and investment through assertive stances on the importance of data flows and high-standard digital trade rules. More recent reports stress the importance of increased U.S. engagement in prioritizing digital trade and investment with Africa, including through African-led initiatives such as the AfCFTA, modernizing AGOA to include digital services, and advocating for African countries to adopt supportive digital policy environments.

The next administration should focus on building a robust U.S.-Africa digital transformation and security partnership to enhance digital sovereignty, thus driving economic development and promoting regional stability. Africa's growing youth demographic, rapid digital adoption, and increasing demand for secure infrastructure offer the United States an unmatched opportunity to strengthen ties through strategic investment and collaboration in critical sectors.

- Expand Africa's digital infrastructure with public-private partnerships focusing on connectivity, data sovereignty, and cybersecurity to protect ecosystems and enable technological independence.
- Boost job growth and digital skills. Building undersea cables and data centers creates U.S. manufacturing jobs, strengthens partnerships in Africa, furthers U.S. global competitiveness, boosts job growth, and equips African youth with digital skills.
- Increase partnerships with African and U.S. financial institutions to fund infrastructure projects and align private-public sector goals.

By combining investments in trade, security, and digital transformation—anchored by strategic initiatives like undersea cables, security operation centers and data centers—the U.S. can help build a more digitally secure and economically vibrant Africa. This approach will counter the growing influence of global competitors and ensures that the United States remains a trusted partner in shaping Africa's future.

Moreover, while previous Council reports have noted the opportunities the digital and ICT sectors present for American and African economies, the ways artificial intelligence (AI) and investments are being utilized across the African continent to innovate offer unique opportunities to address pressing challenges and drive economic growth at an exponential rate. AI has already provided new economic opportunities and facilitated positive impacts across various sectors in Africa, including in information access, health, agriculture, education, and work productivity. The continent is poised to continue to benefit greatly from AI if the right enabling policies that promote innovation and the deployment of AI are implemented. The next administration and the next term of the PAC-DBIA have the opportunity to leverage America's leading innovation in AI to increase trade and investment with Africa through advancing the following priorities:

- Widespread adoption of cloud-first policies. Encouraging the use of cloud computing across government and the private sector. These policies promote efficiency, cost savings, and agility,

democratizing access to AI technologies and providing a foundation for businesses and governments to leverage AI.

- Building a robust digital foundation, including skills development initiatives. This will ensure the African workforce is equipped to participate in the AI-powered economy.
- Modernizing national data systems to facilitate data quality, relevance, and inclusive representation across diverse languages and cultures.

Fostering an enabling policy environment that fuels innovation. Implementing policy frameworks that facilitate innovation and drive investment in AI infrastructure, including by avoiding discriminatory tax and regulatory measures, avoiding restrictive data localization requirements, and promoting open data flows that support the development of AI.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The U.S. Africa Leaders Summit in 2022 was a critical turning point for a more focused approach to U.S.-Africa cooperation. The digital economy is emblematic of this approach where we are bringing the full range of our many capabilities. The Digital Transformation with Africa Initiative (DTA) coordinates and channels the collective efforts of 17 U.S. government departments and agencies laying the groundwork for expanding digital access and promoting regulatory practices for a digital enabling environment. The Department of Commerce has been instrumental in organizing touch points with the private sector to inform policies that facilitate innovation and drive investment. During his trip to Nigeria in July 2024, Assistant Secretary Arun Venkataraman brought together industry representatives and government regulators for a constructive dialogue on effective policy practices to foster the growth of the cloud and AI industries. In April 2024, the Department of Commerce and USTDA led a mission with the PAC-DBIA and Secretary Raimondo to the American Chamber of Commerce Business Summit in Kenya where they announced U.S. private sector commitments and collaborations, including initiatives in data protection, artificial intelligence, digital upskilling, and new investments in digital connectivity, women's tech leadership, and a cybersecurity experience center. Also in 2024, the Commerce Department's liaison office to the African Development Bank launched a collaboration called the "U.S.-AfDB Strategic Partnership for Digital Transformation," through which U.S. companies are connecting with AfDB officials at early stages to develop Bank-funded projects.

DTA is leveraging USG mechanisms to prioritize investments and financing of ICT infrastructure across Africa. Prosper Africa's Tech for Trade Alliance has been connecting leading U.S. tech companies with African partners to pilot innovative technologies that have the potential to scale U.S.-Africa trade. This initiative has facilitated quarterly policy discussions with private sector stakeholders and has closed three projects with joint DTA and private sector funding, such as one with Hello Tractor, a digital e-commerce platform that has increased the access of mechanization services to 1,000 farmers in rural communities across Kenya and Nigeria. Prosper Africa actively disseminates information about ICT development projects to relevant partners through U.S. embassies and USAID missions and is exploring ways to publicize tenders on their new Africa Tech for Trade landing page. In addition, for over five years, DFC has invested nearly \$1 billion in ICT projects. Notably, DFC is funding Africa Data Centers with a \$300 million loan facility as part of a broader effort to bolster digital access and trusted technologies such as 5G and Open RAN.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Recommendations pertaining to agribusiness have been primarily featured in the first and fourth terms of the PAC-DBIA. In earlier reports, the PAC-DBIA pointed to the importance of cold-chain development to support the delivery of crops to market and determining where U.S. companies might engage to reduce bottlenecks, improve efficiency of crop markets, and otherwise prompting the USG to support regulatory harmonization for agricultural imports from Africa into the United States. In the fourth term of the PAC-DBIA, there was a heavier focus on food security and climate-smart agriculture. Members pointed to multilateral initiatives like AIM4Climate and PGI to recommend actions that would benefit the agribusiness sector, leaning particularly on USAID, USDA, and the State Department's PGI team (especially their work around the Lobito Corridor).

Agriculture must remain a cornerstone of U.S.-Africa engagement. While it may not always be viewed as a high-profile sector, it holds immense potential to utilize American goods and services to support Africa's own plans to expand value chains in agriculture and address global challenges like food security and climate adaptation. U.S. innovations in precision agriculture, biotechnology, and sustainable farming techniques position American solutions as critical tools for building resilient agricultural systems across Africa. By implementing past recommendations, including enhancing capacity-building programs, expanding trade partnerships, and supporting smallholder farmers with access to advanced technologies, agriculture can drive shared prosperity and environmental sustainability.

USG ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The United States has implemented multifaceted initiatives that aim to significantly improve food security, reduce post-harvest losses, and create substantial economic opportunities for both U.S. and African economies.

Mobilizing financing is one such initiative. DFC is placing a strong emphasis on investing in smallholder farmers and rural communities, recognizing their vital role in agricultural supply chains. To bolster rural agriculture and food security throughout Africa, concerted efforts are being made to earmark a significant portion of the PGI funding for infrastructure entities that target these underserved sectors. For example, in September 2024, DFC committed a \$5 million loan to Community Markets for Conservation Limited in Zambia to expand its food processing business to support the adoption of sustainable, conservation-based practices. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Commerce is actively working to cultivate collaborative partnerships between U.S. enterprises and prominent African DFIs, such as the AfDB and the World Bank/IFC. Moreover, the MCC is joining forces with various stakeholders to promote the adoption of sustainable cold chain throughout Africa, crucial for preserving the quality of perishable goods. Commerce is also in the process of developing a comprehensive program that aims to standardize cold chain practices.

The USDA and USAID are spearheading initiatives such as public-private field days, where innovative climate-smart agricultural practices are showcased. These events not only demonstrate advanced farming techniques but also foster meaningful connections between U.S. agriculture firms and local African farmers. Additionally, an in-depth study is underway to assess agricultural supply chains-aiming to identify existing bottlenecks and uncover potential opportunities for U.S. companies to enhance market efficiency. Concurrently, the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) is diligently working to harmonize legislation and regulatory frameworks that affect the agricultural supply chain, thereby fostering a more conducive environment for agricultural trade and investment. The USDA is concentrating efforts on facilitating the importation of perishable food products into Africa while concurrently addressing the challenges associated with compliance to USDA protocols. The USTDA is organizing reverse trade missions, which provide African representatives with valuable insights into U.S. cold chain practices. USTDA is also funding projects designed to enhance the distribution networks for food and medicine within Africa, ultimately strengthening the continent's overall food security.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

The Recommendations pertaining to energy and environment sectors have been featured in the first, second, and fourth terms of the PAC-DBIA. In its first term, the Council prioritized strengthening the Power Africa initiative through four key strategies: aggregating demand from industrial off-takers to anchor demand, encouraging investment in early-stage energy projects, investment guarantees for utilities, and addressing transmission and distribution bottlenecks. A fact-finding trip to Nigeria highlighted strategies for expanding energy generation by 10,000 MW, financing early-stage projects, fostering independent power production investments, and enhancing grid reliability. Collaboration with multilateral institutions to provide risk guarantees and regulatory frameworks for gas and power generation was also stressed. In its second term, recommendations targeted Ghana's energy sector following a fact-finding mission. The PAC-DBIA urged USAID to support market catalyzation in Ghana, particularly in renewable energy by supporting U.S. exports through USTDA grants, then operational OPIC financing, and Development Credit Authority guarantees (both now combined into DFC) to enhance bankability. An MOU with Ghana prioritizing renewable energy development through USAID/Power Africa was also recommended.

During its fourth term, the PAC-DBIA advocated reducing barriers to U.S. private sector participation in energy and circular economy projects. The recommendations highlighted the need for increasing funding opportunities for smaller projects via a dedicated DFC window, leveraging Inflation Reduction Act tax credits for U.S.-led African projects, providing financial tools like loan guarantees and currency hedging to de-risk investments, and leveraging U.S. influence with DFIs to advance policies that crowd-in private sector investment in Africa's energy sector. The PAC-DBIA also recommended a comprehensive review of Power Africa's first decade, engaging African governments in creating favorable energy policies, and initiatives that showcase U.S. clean technologies for waste management and clean water through pilot projects to remove regulatory barriers, align standards, and promote the economic benefits of clean solutions.

The energy sector is critical to achieving Africa's development goals while addressing the global imperative for a sustainable future. The Council emphasizes three key PAC-DBIA recommendations for future focus: (a) facilitating the aggregation of demand from Africa-based U.S. industrial energy off-takers to create a baseline of reliable demand that supports bankability; (b) addressing the gap in project bankability by increasing USG and international financing for early-stage energy projects with strong U.S. content; and (c) maximizing U.S. private sector participation in Africa's energy sector on a level playing field while minimizing the crowding out of private sector investors by the USG advancing policies that encourage DFIs to prioritize projects that attract more private debt and equity to co-fund alongside DFIs. Past recommendations to expand access to financing for renewable energy projects and strengthen regional power grids should be implemented to ensure equitable energy access and reduce carbon footprints.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The USG has been investing significantly in Africa's energy infrastructure to enhance economic development and improve access to services. Since 2013, Power Africa has helped deliver new or improved electricity to more than 213.4 million people across SSA. Catalyzing U.S. government and partner investments over the past ten years, Power Africa has leveraged nearly \$25 billion for 156 power projects across the continent for 14,442 MW of new electricity that will power over 44.1 million households and businesses. Over 8,000 MW of new, cleaner, and more reliable electricity are already online. Power Africa plays a coordinating and technical advisory role in African electricity markets, convening governments, utilities, power producers, and electricity consumers to implement reforms, support the commercial viability of the sector, open energy markets to private investment, and improve the design and management of the power sector. The PAC-DBIA's recommendations have provided important insights as Power Africa works to expand its collaboration with key partners and programs, including the AfDB, Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL), the Eastern Africa Power Pool, and the World Bank on issues related to energy demand aggregation and the role of major energy off-takers in the African power sector.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Power Africa supports early project preparation through USTDA grants and feasibility studies which de-risk and unlock bankable infrastructure projects. Since Power Africa's launch, USTDA has supported 130 energy activities to advance energy access in Sub Saharan Africa, including a \$1.2 million advisory facility in South Africa to assist with gas-to-power projects aimed at increasing access to reliable electricity. Additionally, USTDA recently approved funding for a Grid Resiliency and Efficiency Event Series which will introduce delegates to American companies and technologies in the transmission space.

The USG is catalyzing investment by working with the World Bank and other partners to utilize Partial Risk Guarantees (PRGs) and Partial Credit Guarantees (PCGs) whenever possible and appropriate for Power Africa transactions. In 2013, the AfDB used a \$20 million PRG to facilitate the financing of the Lake Turkana Wind Power Project transmission line in Kenya, the first ever PRG granted by the AfDB's African Development Fund. In addition, USAID's PCGs have been offered to Kenyan households to borrow money that will pay for connection and internal wiring fees and will enable tens of thousands of Kenyans to connect to the grid. In the MCC Benin Power Compact, the Off-Grid Clean Energy Facility catalyzed more than \$30 million in private sector funding for mini-grids, solar home systems and other renewable energy solutions. The MCC Côte d'Ivoire Regional Compact includes an activity focused on stimulating investment in independent power producers that will serve the West Africa Power Pool, targeting the many renewable energy projects in Côte d'Ivoire that need early project support and bankability enhancements.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

The health sector has played an integral role in the work of the PAC-DBIA since inception and the recommendations across the terms reflect the evolving environment impacting how U.S. companies in the sector are managing and growing their operations and the delivery of medicines, infrastructure, devices, and services on the continent. Africa is keen to partner with U.S. health companies for their world-leading innovations and quality. One key theme transcends the four terms—the need for public-private partnerships—to help transform and advance health priorities within the bilateral agenda. The recommendations call for greater collaboration with the AU to create a single regulatory market, building a health workforce, investing in critical infrastructure necessary for hospitals and delivery of products and services, and expanding how USG aid and resources can be used as the needs and threats evolve. Members recognized the increased focus by the USG across the agencies on health and are eager to help shape and provide expertise that would be mutually beneficial to USG priorities and advancing U.S. companies interests.

Health systems resilience remains a priority, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 4th term, the PAC-DBIA recommended for the Departments of Commerce and State to establish a healthcare regulatory dialogue with the AU and for the USG to couple it with capacity building programs to support continental regulatory harmonization and the use of reliance methodology. Given general support from the USG on this recommendation, we encourage the new administration to move forward with this recommendation and continue the critically needed capacity building. USG leadership in working with AU institutions including the Africa CDC, African Medicines Agency, and AfCFTA on this issue is critical to counter Chinese influence, grow U.S. health exports and investments to Africa, and ensure the implementation of global best practices that align with U.S. policy priorities.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The interagency has acted on recommendations made by the PAC-DBIA for investing in critical infrastructure in the healthcare sector to improve service delivery and greater collaboration with the AU. The MCC's Lesotho Health and Horticulture Compact, entered into force in March 2024, is improving health outcomes by strengthening Lesotho's primary healthcare system. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, the Compact's Health System's Strengthening (HSS) Project aims to improve data, financial and management systems and improve primary healthcare services and standards of care. Additionally, with participation from the FCS, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USAID, State Department, the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Agency, USTDA has implemented three workshops on Regulatory Harmonization & Convergence for Medical Devices and Pharmaceuticals. In the future, MCC can also provide experience on PPPs in health and locate opportunities unlocked by the MCC for PPPs in the health sector.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Over the years, the PAC-DBIA has consistently advocated for a more robust two-way trade and investment relationship. Accordingly, PAC-DBIA reports have identified key opportunities to strengthen and elevate the U.S.-Africa trade and economic partnership through bilateral engagement mechanisms, including commercial dialogues, government-to-government dialogues or Memorandums of Understanding, tax treaty negotiations, and other initiatives. Early reports underscored the importance for commercial dialogues at country and regional levels to promote market access in Africa for U.S. manufacturing and services companies, including to curb localization policies, support SMEs and skills development, and enhance two-way trade. In 2018, with evolving and maturing bilateral relationships, the PAC-DBIA recommended enhancing trade engagements with Kenya through a multi-agency approach to address market access issues and promote U.S. commercial participation in priority sectors. As the U.S. aimed to pursue MOUs with other African countries, emphasis was placed on competitive monitoring and the active role of the private sector throughout implementation. Additionally, recurring themes of PAC-DBIA recommendations have been PAC-DBIA trips to Africa to conduct fact-finding and demonstrate U.S. commitment to commercial engagement, regular consultation with PAC-DBIA members around senior USG official visits engagements in Africa, and expanded presence of Commercial Officers in U.S. Embassies across the continent. And in more recent recommendations since 2020, the PAC-DBIA has also focused on advocating for regularized engagements at the Head of State level.

We recommend prioritizing tailored, bilateral trade and investment agreements that address the specific needs of each African country while maximizing benefits for American companies.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Informed by PAC-DBIA recommendations over the last ten years that have proposed a wide range of strategies and mechanisms with high potential impact to enhance commercial engagement with African countries, USG agencies and initiatives have made concrete efforts to pursue innovate new mechanisms that promote both American and African economic interests. Many of these efforts have been sustained and borne encouraging results. The Department of Commerce has led the negotiation an upgrading of a series of MOUs with government partners in strategic African markets aimed at strengthening business environments and advancing U.S.-led commercial projects that advance African economic development plans. Currently active agreements are in place with Tanzania, Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Kenya, and Angola. A fundamental feature of these agreements is the inclusion of consultation with the business communities of both the United States and the Africa partner country.

In July 2022, the United States and Kenya launched the Strategic Trade and Investment Partnership, or STIP, initiative. The goals of the initiative are to agree on high standard commitments in a wide range of areas with a view to increasing investment; promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth; benefiting workers, consumers, and businesses (including micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises, or MSMEs); and supporting African regional economic integration. Since launching the negotiations, the two sides have made progress on several important areas of trade, including on agriculture; anticorruption; customs, trade facilitation, and enforcement; environment; good regulatory practices; inclusivity; legal and administrative matters; MSMEs; services domestic regulation; and workers' rights and protections. The STIP demonstrates the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative's unprecedented effort toward partnering with a sub-Saharan African country on high-standard trade commitments.

In response to the PAC-DBIA's call to address the perceptions, sometimes overestimated among American companies, of the risk in doing business in Africa, the Commerce Department engaged the PAC-DBIA to produce a "Keys to Success" report that offers experience-based insights to de-mystify and correct outsized risk assessments through practical strategies for approaching, competing, and operating in African markets. This report was coupled with a webinar series that allowed PAC-DBIA members to speak directly to U.S. and African private sector peers about their experiences. With a similar objective, in 2016, Power Africa launched

ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS

the Coordinator's blog, which was utilized as a unique platform to propagate success stories in Africa's power and electricity sectors.

In recent years, senior-level U.S.-Africa government-to-government engagement, including at the Head of State level, has risen to unprecedented levels. In December 2022, President Biden hosted the second-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, DC, which included the third-ever U.S.-Africa Business Forum, organized by the Secretary of Commerce, as a central component of the Summit. The White House established the Special Representative for U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit Implementation to track progress towards commitments made during the Summit, coordinate implementation efforts, and explore possibilities for future high-level engagements. In advance of the Summit, to generate excitement for the event and amplify private sector insights, Commerce facilitated a public webinar featuring PAC-DBIA members to discuss priorities for the Summit and for U.S.-Africa commercial engagement in general. Since the Summit, an unprecedented number of visits to Africa by senior USG officials have taken place. The White House reports that more than 20 cabinet members and leaders of U.S. departments and agencies have visited the region just since the 2022 Leaders Summit. In conjunction with these visits, USG agencies are benefiting more than ever from pre-trip consultation with the U.S. business community, including PAC-DBIA members and, at times, with accompaniment by PAC-DBIA. Most recently, in December 2024, the President was joined by several members of the PAC-DBIA during his visit to Angola.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Recommendations pertaining to public procurement revolved around encouraging best practices for transparent procurement with a goal of achieving best value and product quality via USG programs that provide development assistance in African countries. We recommended that all relevant USG agencies do the following:

- a. Require programs and fund recipients to take a value-for-money approach to implementing infrastructure projects, moving away from lowest-cost procurement mechanisms to evaluating the total cost of ownership of projects with an aim to ensure the sustainability of investments.
- b. Train all agency procurement leads on the new value-based procurement requirements and how to conduct life-cycle cost analyses for projects under their purview.
- c. Require that recipient countries commit to adopting similar, internationally recognized procurement practices for all public procurements open to international competition.
- d. Consider adopting a scorecard or tracking mechanism to monitor implementation of procurement best practices.

We encourage continued emphasis on development assistance that incorporates best practices for transparency and ethics as an integral part of the assistance program; as well as the time value of money and life cycle costs be a part of an evaluation so that the procuring agency obtains the highest of value. Training remains an important part of this puzzle, so training of leads at agencies is important. A part of the assistance would require countries to institute the use of internationally recognized procurement practices. Also, the use of a scorecard could take into account more than just price, but other aspects of a product such as quality standards followed, time of delivery, financial strength of the company putting an offer forward, the ability to provide follow up services and more that might be applicable to a specific procurement.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In line with the PAC-DBIA's recommendations, the interagency has made immense progress in developing mechanisms, initiatives, and programs to achieve best value and transparency in procurement practices and management. USTDA's GPI continues to support programming to help public procurement officials in establishing practices and policies that integrate life-cycle cost analysis and best-value determination with fairness and transparency. In addition to existing programs in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Botswana, USTDA will evaluate expanding this programming to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Further, the AfDB has recently joined GPI, after collaborating with USTDA on the U.S.-Africa Green and Sustainable Financing workshop held in Côte d'Ivoire in March 2024. The workshop brought U.S. and African project development and financing stakeholders together for mobilizing green and sustainable infrastructure financing across Africa. USTDA also aims to sign a second five-year MOU with the AfDB in December 2025, renewing a shared commitment to strengthening public procurement institutions across the African continent. The Department of Commerce has leveraged bilateral mechanisms such as Memoranda of Understanding, to engage Ministries to track and follow-up on capital projects and works through interagency Deal Teams to support U.S. company proposals. In addition, the Department of Commerce also runs the Express Leads Middle East and Africa (ELMEA) program, which provides early stage leads for U.S. business engagement. Relatedly, in 2024, Commerce made a soft launch of a beta version of the Global Business Navigator, an artificial intelligence-powered Chatbot that's designed to provide information on the exporting process and U.S. Government resources available to assist U.S. exporters. Finally, in 2023 the MCC streamlined its procurement framework to be followed by our international partners. This framework provides more efficient and transparent policy and procedures to all countries.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

The inclusion of SMEs among the PAC-DBIA membership alongside American multinationals ensured that the unique needs of these businesses were considered among the recommendations presented to each administration. Such recommendations focused especially on providing the necessary USG resources to ensure even the smallest of companies could engage in commercial activity with African markets. These resources included people-to-people exchanges, methods of identifying African small businesses to encourage American firms to include them in supply and value chains, skills-building opportunities for entrepreneurs, and one-stop-shop for financing, sourcing, and business certifications. There was particular emphasis on supporting women-owned businesses and entrepreneurs, with recommendations centered around capacity-building, business matchmaking, and building out a platform to enable more female voices to engage in trade and commercial policymaking.

Empowering women and SMEs should remain a central focus of PAC-DBIA's taskings from future administrations. Women-owned businesses and SMEs are critical drivers of economic growth, job creation, and social development across Africa. Past recommendations to improve access to capital, provide mentorship and training, and integrate gender-focused policies in trade agreements should be prioritized to unlock their full potential.

Supporting women entrepreneurs in agriculture, technology, healthcare, and other key sectors not only contributes to economic inclusion but also addresses systemic barriers that limit their participation in the global economy. Additionally, scaling up SME support through programs that provide access to financing, technical expertise, and international market opportunities will enhance the competitiveness of local businesses while fostering a more equitable economic landscape.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Many USG agencies, including DFC, USAID, MCC, USADF, and ExIm, are able to provide a variety of resources and access to capital for SMEs and women entrepreneurs. The Prosper Africa Secretariat routinely provides referrals to other USG agencies for companies and investors who are seeking to access USG tools and resources. Given the volume of interest from the private sector in accessing USG resources, the Secretariat is not able to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for the private sector. Rather, all USG agencies typically operate under a "no wrong door policy," where inquiries and referrals from the private sector can enter from any agency and find the most appropriate contact through regular processes. Prosper Africa and USAID have also conducted trainings for SMEs on the continent intended to improve AGOA utilization. NOTE: Trade & Investment Hubs no longer exist but were replaced by the USAID Africa Trade & Investment (ATI) mechanism.

USAID, through its various programs in Africa, supports SMEs and entrepreneurship. The African Diaspora Marketplace (ADM) is an important example of such support. Launched in 2009 by USAID and Western Union, ADM encourages sustainable economic growth and employment by supporting African diaspora entrepreneurs to invest in Africa. Fourteen of 48 ADM awardees across Africa are women owned/operated (including co-founders).

USAID also actively promotes women's rights in Africa and gender equality and female empowerment is core to development objectives. USAID Trade & Investment Hubs in East, West, and Southern Africa work with hundreds of women-owned businesses to provide training on leadership, management, operations, marketing, communications, and networking. Women are crucial to eradicating extreme poverty and building vibrant economies, and USAID promotes women's economic empowerment and equality by improving women's access to and control of capital, land, markets, education, and leadership opportunities. In Zimbabwe, because women with disabilities are usually left out of mainstream economic growth initiatives, USAID trained 23 deaf and hard-of-hearing women in entrepreneurship and business acumen, financial literacy, and food processing. In Kenya, USAID trained women to become solar technicians, building a more gender-equitable pool of talent for the growing clean-energy technology market in East Africa.

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

In more than a dozen African countries, USAID supports economic growth through the Feed the Future initiative, creating opportunities for women to engage in the value chain, from crop production to processing and marketing. The Feed the Future programs ensure that women producers have equal access to assets, inputs, and technology; develop agricultural interventions and practices that target both men and women equitably; prioritize labor-saving technologies that benefit women in the agricultural arena as producers, processors and marketers of agricultural goods; and improve access to financial services for women in farming and agribusiness. In Ethiopia, USAID established the Women in Agribusiness Leadership Network and subsequently developed focused leadership training and mentorship programs that strengthen these women's support networks and encourage women's economic empowerment.

USAID seeks to empower young entrepreneurs with the skills and networks they need to thrive in business. Alongside the Department of State and USADF, USAID supports the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), a signature effort to support young Africans as they spur growth and prosperity, democratic governance, and peace and security across Africa. The initiative provides training and also serves as a platform for young people to connect and collaborate with each other and experts in the business, civic, and public sectors. Through YALI, USAID supports young entrepreneurs (18-35) with leadership training, networking, and professional development opportunities, such as mentorships and internships, that will support them as they grow their businesses.

Concerning PAC-DBIA's recommendation that they work with the appropriate USG agency to develop data on SMEs and women-owned businesses and the most significant obstacles they face in doing business in Africa (including why U.S.-based SMEs and women-owned businesses don't consider doing business in Africa), USAID's ATI mechanism is likely best positioned to cull gender-specific information from its extensive activities in the field across Africa to understand this question better.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Over the course of the four PAC-DBIA terms, the members have stressed the distinct value-add of American investment in and trade with Africa - an important element of which is skills transfer and workforce development. Companies who engage in such capacity-building not only support the expansion of their goods and services into African markets through an upskilled labor force but also contribute to African governments' goals around employment growth. The PAC-DBIA suggested several ways in which the U.S. Government could bolster these workforce development efforts through initiatives led by the USTDA, USAID, USADF, MCC, State, and Commerce in such critical, high-skilled sectors as healthcare and technology. Longstanding USG programs like YALI are other avenues the PAC-DBIA highlighted as ways for the U.S. to engage in soft diplomacy and foster the next generation of African government and business leaders.

Given the growing population in Africa, it is in the United States' economic interest to encourage African governments efforts to cultivate highly skilled workforces, both to ensure Africa's political and economic stability and meet the demand for highly skilled workers that American firms will hire in-region. While many U.S. universities have established campuses in Asia, Europe, and Latin America, they have not fully taken advantage of opportunities to build campuses and educational arms in Africa. Through the growth of African managerial, analytical, and technological capacity to build businesses and African economies, the United States will expand markets for U.S.-made goods and services and help prepare the African workforce for the future. Alongside the opportunity to grow the university educated workforce, there is a need for U.S. community colleges and VoTech training institutions to expand their businesses into Africa. These more vocational jobs, critical for the day to day success of Africa economies, must be performed in Africa rather than remotely. Areas of interest are health workers (especially nurses, physicians, pharmacists, and physical therapists, etc.) and the skilled trades (especially electricians, plumbers, welders, stonemasons, master carpenters, etc.).

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The USG, through a number of agencies, has actively prioritized workforce development in Africa in several countries. In March 2023, MCC completed a \$107.4 million Workforce Development Activity in Morocco. The activity resulted in 15 technical and vocational education training (TVET) centers being rehabilitated and equipped, offering a projected 91 programs to deliver relevant, high-quality vocational training for a wide range of careers. Additionally, training and job placements were completed via eight job placement agencies providing targeted support to vulnerable women and youth. As of the close of the Morocco Compact in March 2023, 5,062 Moroccans, including 3,650 women, received job placement services. In Côte d'Ivoire, MCC's Skills for Employability and Productivity Project is investing \$35 million in TVET via a private sector-led model.

USAID has supported several workforce development programs, such as the Generation project in Kenya and the Azaki Kanoza project in Rwanda and will consider replicating or expanding such programming.

USTDA has also taken substantial steps to expand its engagement in sub-Saharan Africa and increase training resources, particularly through support for green infrastructure projects. For example, USTDA has recently advanced financing for climate infrastructure in Côte d'Ivoire, providing grants to strengthen the national power grid and improve port logistics. These projects support workforce development by fostering U.S. industry partnerships with local economies. USTDA's programs have been instrumental in creating job opportunities, as seen in their support for projects like decentralized solar mini-grids across multiple African nations. USTDA is also actively replicating successful models like GPI to build capacity in procurement and workforce training in Africa. Through partnerships with U.S. institutions such as George Washington University, USTDA has provided procurement training in various African nations, exemplifying how USTDA is fostering local capacity-building in procurement and workforce development. USTDA's reverse trade missions are another platform for integrating workforce development into its programming. RTMs often include training components to ensure U.S. technology solutions are supported by comprehensive workforce training. For example, recent RTMs focused on port logistics and cybersecurity in Africa have included training on best practices and new technologies, further promoting skills transfer.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Over the past decade, the PAC-DBIA has had a wide-ranging set of recommendations to improve the bilateral trade relationship, especially to grow more integrated and productive supply chains between American and African companies. These recommendations have covered issues such as trade facilitation which would include improvement in customs efficiencies, especially the adoption of technologies that would provide more transparent, certain access to import/export procedures and encourage greater U.S.-Africa trade. In addition, these issues have focused on adopting Good Regulatory Practices that would facilitate access to markets by innovative industries, and ensure that companies, large and small, have a clear, efficient process for regulatory compliance. All of these measures promote “ease of doing” business that enables U.S. and African companies to trade, partner, and promote integrated global value chains.

To maintain momentum, USG and African countries should consider deepening global value chains by prioritizing key sectors that could serve as pilots for supply chain agreements. These types of sectoral agreements could demonstrate value of further trade facilitation, for example through adoption of digital documentation to speed up time to market, ensure greater transparency, and make the processing system more efficient for importers and exporters alike through customs modernization. In addition, efforts to pilot sector projects under Good Regulatory Practices would be an opportunity to promote sound science, risk based regulatory procedures that would facilitate market access for innovative products and build sustainable markets in Africa.

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The USG is actively pursuing a comprehensive strategy aimed at facilitating greater trade and supply value chains throughout Africa which centered around three key pillars: proactive engagement, supply chain optimization, and regulatory cooperation.

The USG is drawing insights from the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to develop robust infrastructure solutions that not only address immediate needs but also prepare for future crises. In September 2024, development finance institutions signed a first-of-its-kind MOU for the Surge Financing Initiative for Medical Countermeasures (MCMs) to cement collaboration and co-financing for a rapid and equitable pandemic response. In addition, DFC and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, expanded their donor liquidity partnership. Building on support put in place during COVID-19, the \$1 billion Rapid Financing Facility will now allow Gavi to access funds from donors making new pledges for pandemic response or routine immunization much faster over the coming years. This addresses one of the key shortcomings of the early COVID-19 response, when delays in accessing finance ultimately delayed access to vaccines.

To develop global value chains in Africa, the USG has focused on local content restrictions that may hinder growth and fostering regulatory cooperation to create a conducive environment for trade. The USG is also working with regional economic communities, such as the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), to promote regional integrations that will enhance trade and economic collaboration across borders. USTR, USAID, and CBP are collaborating with African partners to facilitate the effective implementation of AfCFTA, which aims to boost intra-African trade. USAID is working with the AU to connect the diaspora business community with their counterparts in Africa and currently is quantifying the diaspora business community and constraints on their ability to engage in trade and investment in Africa. Efforts are underway to modernize customs procedures, reducing trade barriers and encouraging the adoption of international standards. This will streamline trade logistics and make cross-border transactions more efficient. Through these strategic initiatives, the USG aims to create new opportunities for American businesses, stimulate economic growth within African nations, and fortify the partnership between the U.S. and Africa. This multifaceted approach seeks to not only advance U.S. commercial interests, but also to contribute to sustainable development across Africa.

AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA)

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS PAST & FUTURE

Recommendations pertaining to AGOA only took shape in this most recent term of the PAC-DBIA, which was a function of the legislation nearing expiry and the considerable consternation around the likelihood of its renewal. Recommendations during the fourth term centered around renewing the legislation and ensuring it enjoyed significant continuity with a 20-year expiry. Additionally, there was great interest in expanding AGOA access and capacity utilization. This manifested in expanding regional eligibility to North Africa, streamlining requirements for agricultural exporters, considering the expansion of eligibility to certain service categories as well as making the requirements more accommodating. The report also encouraged U.S. trade initiatives aligned with the AfCFTA's aim to promote regional integration and expand market opportunities. Lastly, recommendations sought to leverage AGOA to more intentionally achieve policy goals such as friendshoring or critical minerals supply security.

Accordingly, it is the recommendation of the PAC-DBIA to ensure that AGOA legislation is indeed renewed and furthermore given an expiry that assures business continuity and certainty. The PAC-DBIA further recommends that it be considered that certain service categories be strategically added to eligibility in line with better leveraging AGOA to achieve strategic U.S.-Africa trade and investment goals, such as friendshoring and the security of supply of certain critical value chains. Overall, the PAC-DBIA encourages the increased utilization of AGOA legislation, perhaps through the review and potential streamlining of eligibility criteria paired with enhanced sector specific capacity building and education for targeted or high potential sectors.

USG ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The AGOA Private Sector Forum (hosted by CCA) on July 24, 2024 in Washington was well attended by the PAC-DBIA. The Forum also welcomed high-level participation from both the U.S. Government and the African Union, with in person welcoming remarks from Secretary of State Blinken, USTR Amb. Tai, AU Commissioner Muchanga, South African Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition Tau and Deputy Secretary of Commerce Graves. PAC-DBIA members, alongside the rest of the private sector, were encouraged by the strong support U.S. Government officials indicated on behalf of President Biden and the U.S. administration for the renewal of AGOA. A further AGOA Private Sector Forum, hosted by the Corporate Council on Africa in collaboration with the South African Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, was held in Johannesburg, between November 2-4, 2024 and included the AfCFTA Secretariat.

ANALYSIS AND LETTERS

SUMMARIES

[Letter to President Trump Outlining PAC-DBIA 2.0 Priorities
February 28, 2017 \(click to view full letter\)](#)

In February 2017, during the first meeting of the second term of the PAC-DBIA, the Council submitted a letter to the Trump administration outlining its work and achievements and reaffirming its commitment to strengthening U.S.-Africa commercial relations.

The letter emphasized the importance of two-way partnerships to address geostrategic economic competition and meet Africa's growing demand for U.S. goods and services. It identified six key priorities for U.S. government and private sector collaboration:

1. **Energy Availability and Reliability** – Improving regulatory regimes.
2. **Finance** – Expanding access to capital and range of trade and investment mechanisms.
3. **Infrastructure** – Enhancing U.S. competitiveness to address critical gaps.
4. **Technology** – Driving innovation, cross-sector adoption, and supportive policies.
5. **Trade Facilitation** – Streamlining cross-border processes.
6. **Skills Development** – Building workforce capacity.

The Council urged action to strengthen economic ties and support mutual growth.

[Report on Top Issues U.S. Companies Face in Approaching, Competing, and Operating in African Markets November 29, 2017 \(click to view full report\)](#)

In August 2017, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross tasked the PAC-DBIA with identifying key obstacles faced by U.S. firms in approaching, competing in, and operating within African markets. The report was adopted in November 2017, and the analysis would go on to inform the PAC-DBIA's April 2018 recommendations to the U.S. Government on addressing the challenges identified.

Approaching African Markets

The Council identified three major barriers for U.S. firms considering entry into African markets:

1. **Perceived vs. Actual Risk:** Legal, regulatory, financial, and political frameworks are often seen as weak or inconsistent, deterring potential investors.
2. **Underdeveloped Capital Markets:** Limited access to capital, lack of financial transparency, and fragmented regulatory environments create challenges for new entrants.
3. **Market Size and Demand:** Disparities in market maturity and the fragmented nature of Africa's 54 countries discourage businesses from viewing the continent as a unified opportunity.

Competing in African Markets

Three critical challenges to U.S. competitiveness were highlighted:

1. **Foreign Government Advantage:** Competing nations employ coordinated government-led initiatives combining advocacy, financing, and trade mechanisms that outmatch U.S. approaches.
2. **Local Content Requirements:** Especially in ICT and extractive industries, these requirements raise costs for U.S. firms.
3. **Public Procurement Practices:** A preference for low-cost procurement over best-value approaches often disadvantages U.S. firms.

Operating in African Markets

Key obstacles affecting operations in African markets included:

1. **Workforce Development:** U.S. competitors have been more proactive in developing skilled labor pools to support local operations.
2. **Currency Volatility:** Fluctuations and limited access to U.S. dollars hinder payments, investments, and profit repatriation.
3. **Infrastructure and Trade Facilitation:** Inadequate transportation systems and outdated customs processes impede the efficient movement of goods.

These findings underscored the need for strategic U.S. government engagement to address these barriers and foster stronger commercial ties with Africa.

[Keys to Success Report](#) [February 26, 2020 \(click to view full report\)](#)

A key initiative carried over from the second to the third term of the PAC-DBIA was the development of a *Keys to Success* Report. Adopted in February 2020, this document aimed to provide practical insights and lessons learned from PAC-DBIA member companies to guide other U.S. firms exploring business opportunities in Africa. Structured as a complement to the PAC-DBIA's November 2017 report on challenges, this document was organized around the themes of *Approaching*, *Competing*, and *Succeeding* and incorporated real-world examples from member companies to illustrate the effectiveness of the strategies recommended.

Approaching: "Know Before You Go"

In the *Approaching* section, the Council emphasized the importance of understanding diverse consumer needs and tailoring market approaches accordingly. Key recommendations included:

- **Understanding Customers:** Researching local consumer preferences and behaviors.
- **Local Partnerships:** Collaborating with distributors or homegrown partners to establish market presence.
- **Due Diligence:** Conducting rigorous evaluations to comply with stringent FCPA regulations.

Competing: "Taking the Long View"

The *Competing* section stressed the value of long-term investment strategies that align with local priorities to distinguish U.S. firms from foreign competitors. Recommendations included:

- **Long-Term Commitment:** Demonstrating sustained investment in infrastructure, jobs, and community development.
- **Alignment with National Goals:** Ensuring projects align with government priorities to gain local support.
- **Investing in Local Talent:** Building and developing a local workforce to strengthen community ties and enhance competitive advantage.

Succeeding: "Selling Innovation and Leveraging USG Support"

The *Succeeding* section focused on leveraging U.S. strengths to succeed in African markets. Key advice included:

- **Promoting Innovation:** Offering high-quality, responsible technologies that resonate with Africa's young, growing consumer base.
- **Utilizing USG Programs:** Engaging U.S. government resources, such as Prosper Africa, for market insights, advocacy, and streamlined entry processes.

Investment: "Activating American Capital"

The report also featured a dedicated section on mobilizing American investment, crafted by the Council's financial services members. This segment underscored strategies for unlocking U.S. capital to support sustainable and impactful ventures in Africa.

Practical Examples

To demonstrate the effectiveness of these recommendations, the report included anecdotes from PAC-DBIA member companies detailing their investment journeys and lessons learned. These case studies highlighted challenges, successes, and innovative approaches to navigating African markets, providing actionable guidance for prospective U.S. investors.

The *Keys to Success* Report serves as a roadmap for U.S. firms, combining strategic advice with actionable tools to foster successful and sustainable engagements in Africa.

[Letter to President Trump Regarding U.S.-Kenya FTA](#)
[July 28, 2020 \(click to view full letter\)](#)

In a letter to President Trump, PAC-DBIA expressed strong support for advancing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the United States and Kenya. The Council highlighted their 2018 fact-finding mission to Nairobi as evidence of the American business community's positive outlook on Kenya's market potential.

The Council underscored the strategic significance of this FTA, envisioning it as a model for future U.S. trade agreements with other African nations. Such agreements would promote comprehensive market access, ensure a level playing field, and enhance fairness and transparency for U.S. firms seeking to trade with and invest in Africa. The PAC-DBIA emphasized that a U.S.-Kenya FTA could lay the groundwork for deeper and more equitable economic ties across the continent.

[Welcome Letter to President Biden](#)
[May 19, 2021 \(click to view full letter\)](#)

The final deliverable of the PAC-DBIA 3.0 Term was a letter addressed to newly inaugurated President Biden. Although President Biden was familiar with the PAC-DBIA, having witnessed its establishment during his tenure as Vice President under the Obama administration, the Council used this opportunity to emphasize two critical and recurring recommendations from previous terms.

The first recommendation urged the Biden administration to revive the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. The Council highlighted the importance of leadership-level engagement, particularly given the frequent outreach by other global leaders to African governments. A U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, they argued, would demonstrate a strong U.S. commitment to enhancing trade and investment ties with Africa. This recommendation led to the successful convening of a U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and Business Forum in December 2022.

The second recommendation called for a fact-finding mission to Africa led by the Secretary of State. The Council noted that no PAC-DBIA or interagency delegation had visited the continent since 2018 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They emphasized that a high-profile visit by cabinet-level officials would signal the United States' renewed dedication to fostering on-the-ground relationships with African nations, bolstered by private-sector collaboration. This recommendation was reflected in subsequent actions, with every senior member of the Biden administration visiting Africa, culminating in President Biden's historic trip to Angola in December 2024.

These recommendations underscored the Council's commitment to strengthening U.S.-Africa partnerships and served as a foundational step toward advancing mutually beneficial economic and diplomatic tie

ACTIVITIES

PAC-DBIA IN ACTION: 10 YEARS OF EVOLUTION IN UTILITY AND VALUE

The PAC-DBIA undertakes a variety of activities to both inform and amplify its efforts to fulfil its mandate to advise the President on strengthening commercial ties between the United States and Africa. Over the ten years since the PAC-DBIA was established, through the initiative of members and the support of the USG, that range of activities has diversified as the need and value of PAC-DBIA insights have become increasingly recognized by many stakeholders working in building U.S.-Africa relations.

A review of the PAC-DBIA's activities over the last ten years illustrates this evolution in function and helps the Council define and take stock of the full range of activities undertaken, which will provide the basis for imagining new ways the PAC-DBIA may be leveraged in the future. Beyond the PAC-DBIA's core mandate of producing providing information, analysis, and recommendations for the President, the three broad categories that PAC-DBIA activities generally fall into are *Fact-Finding*, *Public-Facing*, and *Consultative*.

FACT-FINDING

- **Trip to Nigeria and Rwanda** – Led by Secretary of Commerce, led to U.S.-Nigeria Commercial and Investment Dialogue and East Africa Cold Chain Development initiative and included announcement of the September 2016 U.S.-Africa Business Forum in New York, NY. ([PAC-DBIA 1.0](#) January 2016)
- **Trip to Ethiopia, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana** – Led by Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade and Secretary of Commerce (Ghana), with participation from 6 USG agencies and the NSC, led to bilateral commercial MOUs with all four countries. ([PAC-DBIA 2.0](#) June-July 2018)
- **Roundtable with African Finance Ministers** – With Ministers from Ghana, Tunisia, Senegal, Ethiopia, and Côte d'Ivoire to discuss challenges and opportunities to fill critical gaps in financing government's economic development plans. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#), October 2019)
- **Roundtable with President of Angola** – By request of President Joao Lorenzo to share with the PAC-DBIA his administration's economic reform agenda and Angola's burgeoning commercial opportunities for U.S. companies, and hear their feedback. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#), December 2020)
- **Roundtable with Ghana Min. of Trade & Industry** – Briefed on implementation of July 2018 U.S.-Ghana commercial MOU, signed during PAC-DBIA Fact-Finding Trip. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#), June 2021)
- **U.S.-Kenya Bilateral Strategic Dialogue** – Receive an immediate readout of the Dialogue from U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Meg Whitman and Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Dr. Alfred Mutua. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), April 2023)
- **Trip to South Africa** – Led by Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), November 2023)

ACTIVITIES

- **Trip to Kenya** – Led Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo for the AmCham East Africa Business Summit, focus on private sector digital technology investments in Kenya. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), April 2024)
- **Commercial Diplomacy Trip to Senegal** – Led by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Molly Phee, marked the PAC-DBIA’s first trip with the Africa Bureau and led to the U.S.-Senegal Joint Economic Commission. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), November 2024)
- **Trip to Angola** – Led by President Biden, marked the PAC-DBIA’s first trip to Africa with a U.S. president. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), December 2024)

PUBLIC-FACING

- **“Keys to Success” panel** – Panel during Commerce Dept.’s Discover Global Markets conference to preview insights from the forthcoming report of PAC-DBIA’s recommended tips on how to approach, compete, and succeed in African markets. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#) October 2019)
- **“Keys to Success” Webinar Series** – Amplify PAC-DBIA’s “Keys to Success” report offering insights on how to succeed in African markets in Healthcare, Infrastructure, Energy, Technology and the Digital Economy, Agricultural and Industrial Machinery, and best practices in Enabling Women Entrepreneurs (January-April 2021)
- **PAC-DBIA Public Webinar** – Generate excitement for U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and preview private sector priorities that will drive PAC-DBIA recommendations to President Biden in 2023. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), December 2022)
- **U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit** – Participate in the U.S.-Africa Business Forum, as well as the African and Diaspora Young Leaders Forum. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), December 2022)
- **African Growth and Opportunity Act Forum (AGOA) Private Sector Dialogue** – Share views on a panel regarding AGOA reauthorization and modernization on a panel. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), July 2024)

CONSULTATIVE

- **Prosper Africa Roadmap Workshops** – Engage with Prosper Africa consultant to inform PAC-DBIA recommendations on the implementation roadmap for Prosper Africa. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#), May-July 2019)
- **Deal Cycle Workshop** – Support the U.S. Government’s effort to map the phases of a deal cycle in order to best organize the USG’s “Prosper Africa Toolkit”. ([PAC-DBIA 3.0](#), December 2019)
- **Chief of Mission Conference** – Provide advice to Chiefs of Mission on how to deliver commercial diplomacy more effectively during a conference panel. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), June 2023)
- **Roundtable with the African Union (AU)** – Participate in a roundtable with AU Commissioner for Economy, Trade, Industry and Mining, Albert Muchanga on strengthening U.S.-Africa trade and investment and provide feedback on stimulating private sector investment in Africa, factors that limit U.S. interest and mechanisms that can mitigate perceived risk. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), October 2023)
- **Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Pre-Trip Briefing** – Brief Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Joy Basu in preparation for her commercial diplomacy trip Benin and Nigeria on enabling environment constraints, positive reforms, and gaps in the schedule. ([PAC-DBIA 4.0](#), October 2023)

ACTIVITIES

- **Secretary of State Pre-Trip Briefing** – Brief Secretary of State Antony Blinken in preparation for his trip to Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Angola on enabling environment concerns, sectors offering commercial opportunity, and overall messaging. (PAC-DBIA 4.0, January 2024)
- **State Department Commercial Diplomacy Training** – Educate Foreign Service Officers on the core elements of the competitive tender process, the stages of the project development cycle and ways to advance transactions. (PAC-DBIA 4.0, January 2024)
- **Assistant Secretary of State Pre-Trip Briefing** – Brief Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Molly Phee in preparation for her commercial diplomacy trip to Senegal on enabling environment concerns, sectors offering commercial opportunity, and overall messaging. (PAC-DBIA 4.0, October 2024)
- **U.S.-Senegal Joint Economic Commission (JEC)** – Provide feedback to the Senegalese government on their Vision 2050 plans to modernize their agriculture sector, digitally transform their economy, and reform federal regulations to attract investment. (PAC-DBIA 4.0, November 2024)

FORWARD-LOOKING RECOMMENDATIONS

FUTURE OF THE PAC-DBIA

The PAC-DBIA should continue in its advisory capacity to future administrations, empowered to support the U.S. government in adopting a targeted yet flexible approach, prioritizing a limited number of countries and sectors to maximize U.S. commercial impact. This focus should be guided by clear and objective criteria such as trade records, U.S. investment levels, and strategic alignment with broader U.S. economic and geopolitical objectives. Recognizing growing distinctions among African nations in their economic and political trajectories, the PAC-DBIA can help focus on country-specific and sectoral recommendations for deeper bilateral engagement, addressing unique trade and investment opportunities tailored to each nation's priorities.

Within the selected focus countries, the PAC-DBIA should identify priority sectors where U.S. businesses have a competitive advantage and where there is significant demand. Potential sectors including renewables, energy production, transmission, and distribution, agriculture and agribusiness, technology and digital services, and infrastructure already have U.S. initiatives that with greater integration of the PAC-DBIA, can ensure that U.S. resources are directed toward efforts with the highest potential for impact, creating mutual benefits for both U.S. and African stakeholders while offering alternatives to investments proposed by competitors.

The U.S. government should lean more heavily on the PAC-DBIA as a strategic body, utilizing its expertise to inform policy and programmatic decisions and ensuring its recommendations influence broader USG initiatives in Africa. Specifically, resuming fact-finding trips with the full council membership and led by the President or Secretary of Commerce should be strategically concentrated on the identified priority countries. These missions would enable PAC-DBIA members to directly engage with local stakeholders, including government officials, private sector leaders, and civil society. By providing an on-the-ground perspective of the challenges and opportunities in trade and investment, these trips will help tailor recommendations to reflect the realities and priorities of the focus countries. Such targeted engagement, such as the trips taken in 2016 and 2018, would significantly enhance the quality and relevance of PAC-DBIA's advice to the U.S. government and elevate America's commercial presence across the continent.

In addition to full membership fact-finding trips, PAC-DBIA members should also be included as part of the delegation in other Cabinet-level and sub-Cabinet leader trips to Africa to showcase U.S. business capabilities and build stronger, comprehensive bilateral relationships. Additionally, formalizing PAC-DBIA support to traveling delegations through detailed briefings and on-the-ground insights, the PAC-DBIA can further solidify its advisory role.

SUSTAINING ACCELERATION IN U.S.-AFRICA COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT

To forge deeper, mutually beneficial economic relationships with Africa, the incoming administration must adopt a proactive and holistic approach to U.S.-Africa trade and investment. By leveraging America's strengths in innovation, sustainability, and private-sector leadership, the U.S. can position itself as a preferred partner for Africa's economic transformation while addressing shared global challenges.

High-level engagement and institutionalized collaboration will be key. Regular U.S.-Africa summits should be institutionalized to provide a consistent platform for dialogue, foster collaboration with African heads of state, and announce significant investments and agreements. Senior-level trade missions to Africa, including private-sector leaders, can identify growth opportunities in critical sectors such as energy, agribusiness, healthcare, and digital technology. These engagements will be central to advancing the key recommendations highlighted by the PAC-DBIA and summarized in this report.

Future administrations should approach U.S.-Africa relations as an opportunity to highlight the unique advantages of American partnerships. As the U.S. operates in an increasingly competitive global market, the U.S. government should emphasize America's strengths, such as offering long-term investments, rooted in collaboration on commercial and development goals, shared values, respect for sovereignty, and ethical business practices. Additionally, showcasing American innovation and expertise in clean energy, technology, and healthcare will reinforce the U.S. as a partner of choice. By prioritizing sustainable investments, empowering diverse entrepreneurs, and leveraging America's strengths, the U.S. can lead in fostering Africa's development while creating opportunities for American businesses and workers. In conclusion, PAC-DBIA stands ready to collaborate with the administration to ensure that U.S.-Africa trade relations reach new heights of mutual success.