

**REMARKS  
OF  
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LANGSTON GLOBAL ENTERPRISES, LLC  
On Behalf  
Of  
THE CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA, (CCA)  
Before the  
2009 U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT CONFERENCE**

**“A New Mental Map of Africa:  
Making the Business Case for Entrepreneurial Investment”**

CHIISSANO CONFERENCE CENTER, MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE, AFRICA

July 15, 2009

Good morning. I bring you greetings from Mr. Stephen Hayes, President and CEO of the Corporate Council on Africa, the Board of Directors and the affiliated corporate, public, private and non-profit sectors members.

The Corporate Council on Africa is a non-profit, membership organization dedicated to strengthening and facilitating the commercial relationships between the United States and the countries of Africa.

It is an honor to be in Mozambique to participate in the U.S. Trade and Investment Conference. I thank the U.S. Embassy for their leadership in hosting the conference.

I am equally honored to share the podium with his Excellency, President Amando Guebuza, distinguished ministers, and representatives of commerce, industry and government. My remarks will focus on “A New Mental Map of Africa: Making the Business Case for Entrepreneurial Investment”.

On January 15, 2003 President George W. Bush noted in his forward thinking mental mapping of Africa stated:

“...For many years, America and the world looked to the continent of Africa and saw only its problems. That era has passed. In this new century, the world is beginning to see the great potential of Africa, and the goodness of its people.

On Sunday, July 12, 2009 President Obama expressed in Ghana a similar view:

“...Here in Ghana, you show us a face of Africa that is too often overlooked by a world that sees only tragedy or the need for charity.”

Unfortunately, the prevailing and all too familiar mental mapping of Africa was recently noted on Saturday July 11, 2009, as President Obama arrived in Ghana, in a New York Times News Analysis:

"...The list of exploding countries, unstable countries, corrupt countries, is long. Military coups still break out with regularity, as in Guinea and Mauritania within the last year. Journalists in a number of countries continue to be killed, jailed or tortured, forced into exile or otherwise muzzled..."

Time Magazine, March 23, 2009, Africa Open for Business in an otherwise favorable article, also focused on the world perception of Africa:

"... Africa is hopeless, a place of war and famine seemingly populated almost entirely by tyrants and children with flies in their eyes..."

### **The New Mental Map for Africa**

The Corporate Council on Africa sees a different Africa. We see a continent as observed in the manner President Obama and former President Bush have noted...an Africa too often overlooked... defined by its problems... and not for its great potential. Stephen Hayes put it succinctly, "Africa offers more opportunity than any place in the world".

Unfortunately, the current mental map of Africa is still dominated by historic and current images of despair and suffering. A major challenge for the private sector and the civil society working with government is to pursue an active but intelligent relationship to change and foster a new mental map of Africa as a place of serious business and as a continent with huge potential for enterprise and innovation. Therefore, a new mental map of Africa which shows current evidence and trends of success is desperately needed.

The Corporate Council on Africa Business Report noted that private equity in Africa is on the rise. Africa is also experiencing the world's highest rate of return on investment and poised to be among the best performing regions in the world economy. Specifically:

"Lost amid the ongoing debate on the efficacy of aid to Africa... is an alternative capital flow trend... that is gaining momentum across the continent. Private equity investment in Africa is on the rise... and stands to increase further in the coming years".

The Corporate Council through its U.S. Africa Business Summit is a primary venue for business to business linkages between U.S. commercial enterprises and African Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The U.S. Africa Business Summit will be held in Washington, D.C. September 29-October 1,

2009. The theme of the Summit is Realizing the Investment Power of Africa. The goal of the Summit is to highlight the continent as the next key emerging market for U.S. investors.

### **The Business Case for Entrepreneurial Investment**

A new mental map of Africa based on the recent capital investments across the continent should examine the pace and pulse where the trajectory of growth is positive and upward. According to the International Monetary Fund many of Africa's countries now boast growing economies. Africa must see itself as more than a business destination but as a "business enterprise" As Africa Inc.

Yes, Africa Inc. an emerging business enterprise with the passion to strategically pursue an entrepreneurial economy. Africa and particularly Mozambique should encourage the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) and their linkage and strategic alliance with business enterprises organizations like the Corporate Council of Africa. The notion of Africa Inc. will require leadership and most importantly, it will demand we Trust. Trust!...Trust!...Trust each other!

### **The Challenge to Measure Emerging Strengths**

Africa in its pursuit for economic growth may represent the next wave of entrepreneurial laboratories of prosperity. The purposeful investment in entrepreneurial leadership and targeting businesses to pursue size, scale and capacity will lay the foundation for sustained growth and prosperity.

The challenge for Africa is to break away from the economic models and analyses of "measuring failure". The new entrepreneurial model must search and invest in new systems and data mining that focus on solutions. African leadership at all levels... particular among emerging business enterprises must embrace a sense of urgency for entrepreneurship.

Equally critical, the new mental map for Africa should identify "clusters of innovation" powered by emerging entrepreneurs who are purposefully linked to capital and strategically encourage to grow.

Across Africa, there is a need for the establishment of "knowledge management centers" linked to information systems which will provide training and technical assistance to emerging and high growth companies for competitive advantage.

I know from the American experience there is success within inner cities and rural areas. Throughout Africa, I believe there are thousands of SMEs who have the potential to thrive domestically and regionally. These SMEs are the emerging entrepreneurs which represent Africa's development potential to create jobs and wealth. I believe U.S. corporations can

play a critical and fundamental role in nurturing and aligning its skills and resources with Africa's emerging entrepreneurs.

### **The Private Sector as Key Driver**

Using the private sector as a key driver in reshaping the mental mapping of Africa...  
Imagine replicating the best one hundred (100) companies in each regional hub.

Imagine in Mozambique identifying and mapping by sector, the best one hundred (100) businesses

Then imagine identifying and annually rating Africa's best 500 businesses. Yes, the Africa 500.

Imagine an "All Africa" strategy to align the best 100 and best 500 companies on the continent.

Imagine African businesses working globally with the Fortune 500 businesses of Europe, Asia, the Americas and Pacific Rim nations.

Imagine a strategic alliance with the Corporate Council on Africa and its network of commercial linkages to private equity investment.

Imagine the managerial expertise of global enterprises investing their time, talent and treasure in enhancing the growth and expansion of technology and telecommunications in Mozambique and throughout Africa.

### **The Vision**

The scriptures say, "...where there is no vision, the people perish..." I believe there is a vision in what we can imagine... and the opportunity to "do good" and "do business". Let us embrace a vision which pursues a strategy that systemically develops internal national African champions... who can attract investment capital to compete in local, regional and global markets. Together ...we can learn the lessons of social entrepreneurship and business innovation... and pursue an intelligent relationship for change.

To the U.S. business interests here in Mozambique and Africa there must also be a sense of urgency and passion for Africa. We must resist the temptation to view the continent as a risk assessment calculus. We must disentrail ourselves from the historic image of Africa as the Dark Continent... where the only sustainable growth is measured in suffering. The entrepreneurial spirit that pioneered the growth in the American economy is still alive. Let us bring it aggressively with confidence, to Africa.

The United States must recognize we need Africa. Africa we need you! We are historically and emotionally linked by history and ancestry. I believe Africa is essential to the next

evolution of innovative change in the world. We at the Corporate Council on Africa welcome the challenge of change. Let us reestablish the mental mapping of Africa as a region that represents the new entrepreneurial spirit for investment. Let us begin here in Mozambique.

Finally, the scripture counsels those who believe "...let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" Africa, Mozambique, be not weary in well doing. This is your season! This is your time!

We look forward to seeing you at the U.S. Africa Business Summit, September 29-October 31, 2009 in Washington, D.C.

Thank you.