



**Statement of Lead Republican Michael McCaul (R-TX)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

“Democracy, Development, and Defense: Rebalancing U.S.-Africa Policy”
May 16, 2019

Remarks as Delivered

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The United States has been a long and consistent partner with many African nations. Successful initiatives such as PEPFAR, the President’s Malaria Initiative, Feed the Future, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation have already saved millions of lives, created jobs, and spurred economic growth.

Just last month I traveled to Cote D’Ivoire, Rwanda, and Tunisia with Senator Lindsay Graham where we helped launch the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative.

This initiative will provide workforce development and skills training, expand access to capital for entrepreneurs and remove barriers to women’s participation in the economy through micro-financing.

Some of the fastest growing economies in the world are in Africa, and its the fastest growing population, as well. With a growing number of middle-class consumers this means new markets for U.S. companies, and new opportunities to partner with the United States.

However, countries must have a clear-eyed approach on how this growth is being achieved and who they are partnering with.



Between 2000 and 2017, China loaned African countries \$143 billion for infrastructure projects.

China views Africa's growth as an opportunity for geographic and ideological expansion through their Belt and Road Initiative, which preys on developing nations, leaving them largely in debt traps.

The United States must provide a better alternative to China's exploitation. I have met with African governments, ambassadors and business leaders. They all tell me the same thing that the U.S. is their preferred partner, but we are just simply not there. The United States brings quality, transparency and partnership, but we must show up to the game to compete.

That is why my bill, the Championing American Business Through Diplomacy Act, is so important. It helps ensure that State better supports American companies of all sizes looking to invest in Africa and elsewhere bringing prosperity and most importantly, stability.

The Chairman and I introduced the Global Fragility Act, which I think is a very important bill to help stabilize the destabilized continent, particularly when you look at the Sahel which the Department of Defense, as Ms. Lenihan knows very well, the Sahel is going to be the next hot spot. If we can't do the prevention piece right, then we have to send in the military. I think the Global Fragility Act is a good playbook for the Department of Defense to look at how we can prevent extremism so we don't have to go in and kill.

The BUILD Act that Mr. Yoho introduced is a profound, significant piece of legislation that will put OPIC on steroids, and I think economic investment and opportunity from the private sector.

In line with my legislation, I applaud the administration for their work on Prosper Africa, to increase two-way trade with African countries.



The United States also plays an important role supporting good governance and democratic values on the continent.

We must continue working with countries to combat corruption and respect human rights.

In Ethiopia, we have seen a historic transition and I commend the bold reforms by Prime Minister Abiy. In Sudan, the people have risked their lives to call for a civilian-led government and an end to Omar al-Bashir's brutal regime. The U.S. must stand by the people of Sudan during this critical moment in their history.

I know very well from my time as Chairman of Homeland Security Committee that ungoverned and unstable places become safe havens for terrorists to regroup and plan attacks and external operations. I am deeply disturbed by the increasing number of attacks targeting innocent civilians, including women and children.

The United States must continue to stand with our African partners in the fight against radical Islamic terrorism. That is why proactive investments in security and development now will make the United States far safer in the long run.

I am also concerned that the proposed reduction in U.S. special forces and advisors in the Sahel is premature. My bill, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Act, calls for an interagency approach to address these threats.

These witnesses today have valuable insight into these challenges facing Africa and bring together State, USAID and [Department of] Defense, which is what our Global Fragility Act



actually does in a inter-agency, whole-of-government approach to address this challenge that we have.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield.

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