

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

**Senator Christopher Coons (D-DE) on the Nexus of Security, Development,
and Governance at CSIS**

Moderator:
Jennifer G. Cooke,
Director of Africa Program,
CSIS

Speaker:
Senator Christopher Coons (D-DE)

Location:
B1 Conference Center,
CSIS 1800 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006

Time: 9:00 a.m. EDT
Date: Tuesday, June 19, 2011

Transcript by
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.

JENNIFER COOKE: Good morning, everyone. Thanks for your patience. The train from Delaware was running a tad late, so it's not the fault of our speaker today. Just want to welcome you here to CSIS. My name's Jennifer Cooke. I'm director of the Africa Program here. And I'd like to welcome you – oops, I'm getting a signal. (Off mic) – my glasses. Talk into the mic? Is that – OK.

Welcome you here today for a discussion on East Africa. Senator Coons will reflect on his recent trip to East Africa, where he visited Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. We're really delighted to have him here. Senator Coons is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He's chair of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs.

I have to say, it's really been a delight to have you in that position. The energy and passion and, I think, leadership on issues of governance, of security, of development and the connections among all of these – it has been very important; and an advocate, I think, for a very smart, sustained U.S. engagement in Africa and the new and evolving ways that we need to engage with Africa to stay relevant in a changing global and African context. So his work in encouraging investment and trade I think has been extremely important and timely.

East Africa, where the senator recently traveled, has become of really much greater significance in U.S. policy calculations in Africa. Each of the countries visited – Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania – have in their own ways been important partners to the United States. Each faced distinct challenges in security, development and governance. They're all significant recipients of U.S. assistance, all three big partners in PEPFAR, Tanzania in the Millennium Challenge Corporation. In security, Kenya and Uganda in particular have been important players in the fight against al-Shabab in Somalia, which threatens not only Somali populations but the region at large.

And in governance, each faces distinct challenges. Uganda essentially remains, unfortunately, an authoritarian state under the 26-year rule of President Museveni. Kenya, in which democratic norms are probably more firmly entrenched, nonetheless is facing big challenges of potential volatility, violence in the lead-up to these elections and has a major political restructuring under way, given the passage of the new constitution last year. And Tanzania, which has been a – kind of a stable country, is – the focus is more in terms of curbing corruption and in terms of making Tanzania a more attractive investment environment and so forth.

So the senator's trip was brief, but I think he got some good conversations on all of these topics. I'll turn it over to him, and then we'll leave as much time as we can for question and answer and discussion. So Senator, welcome, and thanks so much for joining us. (Applause.)

SENATOR CHRIS COONS (D-DE): Thank you, Jennifer. And thank you so much for CSIS' leadership in this area in making sure that for 50 years now, in Washington and around the world, we are able to participate in a thoughtful and balanced and mature dialogue on important issues of defense and security and how we balance our values and our priorities around the world.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Jennifer to testify in front of the Senate Foreign Relations area – the Africa Subcommittee as a witness. And I'm grateful for her many contributions, as well as for the CSIS Africa Program and its contributions to the discourse on African affairs here in Washington and elsewhere.

As Jennifer mentioned, I have the honor in this Congress, the 112th, of chairing the Africa Subcommittee. And I hope to continue to have that honor in future Congresses; we will see. (Laughter.) I am succeeding Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin, who for nearly a decade served the same role very admirably and I think helped convene a responsible and sustained conversation and engagement by the United States in Africa.

And in my current work I am truly blessed to have Senator Johnny Isakson of Georgia as my ranking minority. I call him my co-chair, because the two of us and our staff work so closely and so positively together in an environment in Washington where bipartisanship is more recognized for its occasional outbreaks than for its predominance in conversation. Senator Isakson and I and our staff – Halie Soifer, who's here with me, my foreign policy LA, and his, Sully (ph), have worked remarkably well together. And that has made this even more important.

Jennifer wrote recently an important piece called "Changing the Narrative." And I will try and use that in part as the theme as we talk about U.S.-Africa relations, particularly in the East African context today; because at a time of constrained budgets, at a time when the United States media is less and less investing in direct reporting from the continent and at a time when there are very important developments across the continent, I do think it is critical for us to change the narrative within the United States, within our private sector, our nonprofit sector, broadly in our country about the future of Africa and the enormous promise contained within Africa.

Last month, as you heard, I had the first opportunity to return to East Africa since a semester spent there 28 years ago as an undergraduate at the University of Nairobi, and since I was last there 25 years ago as a relief worker with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and helping in an orphanage in Ngong. It is striking to me both how much it has changed and how much it hasn't.

The skyscrapers of Kampala and Dar es Salaam were unrecognizable. When I was last in Kampala, it had been torn apart by a very difficult civil war. And Dar es Salaam at that point was the leading city in a nation that – whose economy was almost completely flattened by Ujamaa socialism, which had failed to deliver sustained economic growth.

On the other hand, some things haven't changed at all. President Museveni had in 1987 just arrived in the capital city. And I had an opportunity to meet with him just a few weeks ago. And as Jennifer mentioned in the opening, he is still there as the president today. (Laughter.) As I stood at the corner of Uhuru Park in downtown Nairobi, there were a number of sort of market symbols that were still easily recognizable, but they were surrounded by a thicket of new skyscrapers and by a throng of nearly a million new vehicles, it seemed.

The challenges of Mathare Valley remain there even more deeply and robustly than they were before, and more painfully. But the opportunity of an emerging middle class, of steady but slow progress towards democracy and transparency across the region, and the promises of regionalism are all things that struck me in this visit of just a week or so.

It is clear to me that the African people continue to hold a remarkable culture, a commitment to family, to each other, to faith that I spoke about at the prayer breakfast in Nairobi, that touched me deeply in those two visits 25 and 28 years ago and that still strikes me today as being something from which the people of the United States could learn and should learn.

But there are also significant structural challenges to their making full progress and participating in the promise of the modern world and of democracy and of the opportunities that a fully integrated modern global economy hold out for them. So let's take, then, if we could, a few moments to talk about what I see as the three main strands.

In the first home-stay family that I stayed with, just north of Lake Victoria in a very tiny rural, rural town about a hundred miles north of Kisumu, there was a saying on the wall, which I won't get right. I won't try to repeat it in Kiswahili. But it essentially said that there are three cords in this marriage – there is the husband, the wife and God – and that the three of them – any one of them might fail to stand, but the three of them woven together into a common cord were unbreakable. And so that family often referred to the three strands of a woven rope – of a cord, that if straight and taut and woven finally was nearly unbreakable. But any one of those three was not sufficient or strong enough on itself.

So security, governance, economic growth struck me as themes that were interwoven both across these three countries and across the region, and that were highlighted as being at the center of a myriad of issues, a web of issues that challenge and lift up the people of East Africa. In order to be successful, in my view, we have to look at all three of these in series, each within the countries in their own context but also in a regional context, to do the best job we possibly can to be strong and effective and vital allies and partners with the people of East Africa and the people of the continent as they seek solutions to the challenges that face them today and going forward. I also see these three as inextricably linked.

Security of course, as Jennifer mentioned, is an enormous challenge for the continent and for the region. And while relative stability has returned to Uganda as the Lord's Resistance Army, which had long caused enormous human suffering in northern Uganda, has largely been removed from the region, is now in sort of remote corners of Central African Republic, South Sudan and the DRC. The work of reconstruction, of restoration and of healing of whole communities is expensive, is difficult, is long and is work in which the United States government, our NGO partners, the faith community are actively engaged.

And so on one level, one of the most secure – one of the most encouraging things for me to see was the steady progress we're making, both in a regional effort to remove Joseph Kony and his commanders from the battlefield; the central role that the United States military is playing in training, in providing equipment, in providing resources and intelligence to that effort;

but also the real leadership shown by the AU and by the Ugandans in an effort that is African-led.

If you look around the region, it is even more true that the potential sources of regional instability – the ongoing and worsening conflict between Sudan and South Sudan, the very real challenges al-Shabab poses to security and stability in Somalia, a country that for two decades has known neither, and the very real human rights abuses and insecurity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – all around this central core of the three East African community core countries, there are sources of great instability.

There are also potential solutions to these sources of instability, where regional efforts led by the AU, led by Kenya and Uganda and to some smaller extent Tanzania, can help push back on Somali piracy, on insecurity and instability on the borders, on the very real challenges that the DRC has posed and its conflicts have posed to Rwanda and Burundi and others, and on the very real challenge – the very real possibility that Sudan and South Sudan, currently engaged in an unproductive mutual death grip, may cause a downward spiral and another failed state in the region.

More positively, shared resources in terms of intelligence, training and planning have produced AU-led and U.N.-sanctioned initiatives and efforts in the region that have stabilized the security situation and made possible some of the most robust growth on the entire continent. Tanzania is a country that has relatively few, if any, significant security issues. And in Kenya, its major security challenge is on its border with Somalia and the ongoing threats of al-Shabab actions within the country.

It was hard to miss this fact, because just the day before we arrived a bomb went off in downtown Nairobi, and it sort of dominated many of the conversations and news. And the ongoing Kenyan action was, the week after we left, officially folded into AMISOM with the signing of an MOU and the sort of rationalization of a regional effort that will combine Ethiopians, Ugandans, Burundians and Kenyans in a well-planned and, I hope, well-executed effort to not just remove al-Shabab but also replace with Somali institutions and Somali democratic leadership.

So security is the first of three strands that regionally is absolutely essential to making any progress on the other key strands.

A second strand, if I could, that I wanted to touch on for a few minutes today was in economic development because in my view, economic development critically undergirds and underscore the possibilities and the hope for democracy and good governance. Economic development is one area where this region has done remarkably well over the last 25 years, and we see enormous prospects for progress. Great recent discoveries in natural resources (pooled ?) both promise and threat. Much of the growth in Africa, just on a percentage basis and on an – on a total basis, has been in extractive industries, and the challenge is to continue diversification into manufacturing, into services, into infrastructure, into IT.

And one of the enormous opportunities that exist across the continent is a generation of young people, many of whom are beginning to reverse a decades-old trend of brain drain of going to the United States and other countries to pursue higher education and not returning. One of the most encouraging meetings that I had while I was there was with a promising, innovative, impressive group of young people, many of whom had been educated in the U.K. or the United States and had chosen to return to Nairobi. One group had started an IT community call the iHub (sp). Another had chosen to start a grassroots effort called Ecosandals in Mathare Valley that was locally owned and locally led, taking advantage of AGOA to export. Truly fashionable – you can find them at ecosandals.com – footwear. (Laughter.) There is a truly amusing photo of me in suit and tie donning my Ecosandals. (Laughter.) And we had similar conversations with professors and young people in Kampala about their local chapters that works in partnership with Engineers Without Borders from UC Davis, and young entrepreneurs who are investing in infrastructure and energy in Tanzania in a conversation in Dar.

All of these suggest that in many ways, Africa's most precious resource and potential for opportunity, both in market and in market drivers, is its people. And if we can engage in real partnership with Africa in a way that deploys some of our greatest resources – our world-class universities, our emerging capacity at distance learning, our ability to deliver on programs in performance and mid-level management and – I don't mean bureaucracy necessarily – we can help to strengthen the groundwork on which sustained, positive, inclusive economic growth can occur.

One of the things that was most impressive to me about Tanzania was how positive the relationship remains between the United States and Tanzania. Having no significant security challenges, having stable democracy and governance, has allowed Tanzania to be one of our strongest partners in the Millennium Challenge Compact.

We had the opportunity to see some of those projects and how they were actually playing out on the ground. That \$700 million compact, one of the largest in the MCC's history, is addressing fundamental issues for their economy: the infrastructure for the distribution for energy, and I was encouraged by the very real partnership we see between the United States and Tanzania; the efforts they're making to combat corruption; the investment that they are making as a nation in partnering with us and delivering on the MCC work.

And I was encouraged to see some Delaware companies successfully exporting chicken to Zanzibar and developing new seed hybrids for distribution through a Feed the Future partnership across the country. There are enormous tracks of arable land in Africa that are underutilized, and there is real opportunity here for a partnership between the United States, our research universities, the ministries of agriculture and the emerging leadership of the region to make a fundamental different in a way that hasn't happened over the last 25 years. Africa is one of the few places in the world where the remaining key security question is food insecurity and health insecurity and where the United States has made critical investments to make progress on both of those.

The last and most vital strand, I think, of the three is in governance. And this was our main focus in Kenya, whereas Jennifer mentioned in the introduction, in the run-up to next

year's elections, there is and should be a primary focus by the international community in supporting those voices within Kenyan society in the press, in the nonprofit sector, in the faith community and in government who are willing to stand up and work and fight and assert the primacy of Kenya as opposed to any particular region or group or ethnicity.

This will be a great challenge. I think the 2013 elections will be an absolutely essential turning point for the people in the nation of Kenya. And I was encouraged to meet with some terrific and impressive people, Speaker of the Parliament Kenneth Marenda, and to speak with Chief Justice William Mutunga, both of whom are willing to take real risks in order to press forward on building independent institutions.

Without a free press, without an independent judiciary, without a legislative body that can hold the executive accountable and without sustained progress towards their remarkable new constitution, which includes the devolution of power from a unitary federal government to counties, something I have long experience in as a 10-year countywide elected official – there are real challenges, even in our own country, in making local government transparent and effective and responsive. And I hope that we will continue to sustain our very real investments in working in partnership with the people of Kenya and delivering on that.

In a speech that I gave first at the National Prayer Breakfast and then again on a similar topic at the University of Nairobi, my main goal was to reinforce against a broad misperception in the Kenyan public that the United States has no preference for any particular candidate, region or outcome in the elections, but instead simply supports the process of free, fair, open and safe elections. This is an important message for us across the continent, because there are nations that have moved steadily towards democracy and transparency, and there are nations that recently have slipped backwards where coups and countercoups, where constitutional amendments and elections of questionable legitimacy continue to suggest a backwards trend.

One of our greatest partners in this is strong regional institutions. In the testimony you gave previously about Cote d'Ivoire, the role that ECOWAS has played in Cote d'Ivoire and Mali is a strong suggestion of the vital role that regional institutions can play. The East African Community, predominantly an economic institution at this point, is at its nascent stages in having some supportive role to play. It can and should play a central role in reducing trade barriers, in improving regional standards, in streamlining infrastructure and other institutions, but it can and should, along with the AU in Addis, also play a regional role in encouraging democracy and good governance.

Mo Ibrahim testified in front of our subcommittee about his prize. And while I know many will not leave the pleasures of national leadership for a mere \$5 million prize, it suggests an emerging regional, if not continentwide, cadre of seasoned and secure leaders – the elders, among others – who can call those who have achieved national leadership to hand the reins of power over to a successor peacefully and responsibly. And it is my real hope that President Kabaki, who gave a compelling speech to this effect about his commitment to his lasting legacy after 10 years as president, being a final, secure, safe and appropriate and open election in 2013, we can, I hope, then encourage a new generation of leaders, not just in Kenya but across the region, to respect the ICC, to hold accountable those who committed atrocities against their own

people, whether they be in Syria or in Cote d'Ivoire, whether they be in Kenya or in other places around the world. Emerging global and regional standards for conduct are critical to having standards for governance and democracy.

Transparency is also absolutely critical, and it is key that there be some consequence for those who violate transparency and for those who take actions that push back against our values agenda. One of our best tools in this regard in my view is the Millennium Challenge Corporation. And if we are going to change the narrative, if we are going to change from a transitory focus where it is really only the crises that attract global attention and that attract the attention of decision-makers and policy leaders in the United States, then we need to continue to invest in a mature, balanced and responsible process where we set clear standards, we encourage countries who are allies and partners to step up and to meet them, and then we invest in responsible and sustained partnership with them towards that.

President Banda of Malawi was just in Washington visiting with a number of us in the past week. Her nation was removed from the list of those eligible to proceed with the Millennium Challenge Corporation because of some regrettable actions that suppressed freedom and openness and that moved backwards in terms of tolerance and openness and accountability. Now that there is a new administration and there has been a transition, they are taking swift and sure action, I believe, in the parliament and in her – with her leadership to get back to being a country that is deserving of strong investment in partnership with the United States and of strong multilateral regard.

We also have to make sure that the investments that we are able to make as a nation are sustainable. In this time when our budgets are under greater stress than ever, when there is less attention being paid to this most important of continents, it is critical that we look hard at our own internal structure for sustaining our investment in defense, in development and in diplomacy. I was truly impressed with the caliber of those who represent the United States in the region, from Peace Corps workers to ambassadors, from USAID career employees to those in the faith community and the nonprofit sector who represent us across the continent. We are also at last beginning to engage with those within the United States who have not previously been as fully leveraged as they could or should be.

There has been a fundamental shift in the capital flows from the United States to Africa in the last 25 years since I was last there. Instead of the vast majority of investment onto the continent from the United States coming through U.S. government and development and relief funding, it is now overwhelmingly from the private sector; that is as it should be. And as we begin to move from relief and development to investment and trade, it is my very real hope that we will take a harder and closer look to ensure that our development investments are as sustainable and transparent and efficient as they can be, and I want to specifically commend USAID Administrator Raj Shah for some very tough decisions in this regard that are not easy but that are geared towards making our investments responsible and sustainable.

And I also want to make sure that we continue as a community and dialogue here in Washington to remember to engage the states from which our representatives come and to engage our media and to challenge them to focus on the positive stories across these three

strands, across security, democracy and governance, and economic development, because there is enormous opportunity on this continent. We can sustain our investment, and we can take advantage of the huge opportunities that it poses. As I suppose everyone in this room knows, six out of 10 of the fastest-growing economies in the world were on the African continent in the last decade; it's likely to be seven out of 10 in the next decade.

All of these sustained, positive changes can be strengthened if we work together as a country and as a community. And I was very pleased with the White House strategy that was just released this week. This new presidential policy directive on U.S. strategy towards sub-Saharan Africa highlights a renewed commitment by this administration to an all-of-government approach. It is my hope that we will see that delivered upon, that we will see a more robust engagement by the Department of Commerce in particular, which I frankly think has been sadly missing for many of our critical efforts in the continent, and that we will begin to see a more coordinated effort between XM (ph), OPIC, the trade and development administration, USTR, Department of Commerce with our lead agencies USAID and State, both of which have done, I think, a strong and admirable job in facing up to the challenges of the continent and in strengthening and supporting our allies in the continent.

There are reasons why those of us in the Congress, despite blinding partisanship at times, have some optimism about the prospects for progress. Senator Isakson and I paired with our Republican and Democratic compatriots over in the House, Congressman Smith and Congresswoman Bass, in all four of us presenting to the AGOA conference our assurance of our continued and tireless effort to renew the AGOA third-party fabric agreement. It is frustrating to all four of us that it has taken this long in order to get this noncontroversial and essential provision renewed, but I am confident that this will happen and happen soon, and that leaders in both bodies are well aware that tens of thousands of jobs, predominantly of women, predominantly in the least developed and most remote countries in Africa, are at stake if we fail to make sustained progress in this.

AGOA and the AGOA third-party fabric agreement are just the beginning. We need a stronger, broader and more robust trade relationship, one that opens up broader opportunities, one that provides stronger resources to the African continent in order that we can sustain a flourishing trade relationship. The United States has been eclipsed by China as Africa's main trading partner just in the last two years, and this is a moment, a moment when we should reflect, and a moment when I think we should renew and redouble our effort.

Buried within the policy document released by the president is a reference to a new "doing business with Africa" campaign that will harness the resources of the U.S. government and the African diaspora community within the United States. I've introduced a bill, along with Senator Durbin, who's the lead sponsor, Senators Isakson and Boozman, called the Increasing American Jobs Through Greater Exports to Africa Act, which I am hopeful we will take up and act upon soon, but that reinforces this fundamental policy direction by the White House. As the White House policy directive makes clear, quote, "sustainable, inclusive economic growth is a key ingredient to security, political stability and development, and underpins efforts to alleviate poverty, creating the resources that will bolster opportunity and allow individuals to reach their full potential."

There are so many other topics and issues on which we touched during my visit to East Africa and which I could have discussed today. Conservation: There is a critical loss of world historic wildlife in East Africa and across the continent going on now. There is a real risk that security and stability issues, governance issues, are going to have a tragic impact on world-class wildlife. So conservation, poverty alleviation, helping millions of human beings gradually move to a place of security and stability in food and health.

Climate change and the importance of, in particularly fragile areas around the continent, making sure that we build resiliency into economies, such as the Horn of Africa, where we've seen a tragic famine, and the Sahel region in the west of Africa, where we are seeing a rapidly-emerging famine, where I believe climate change plays some important role.

Across all of these fields, health and food, strengthening and sustaining conservation and stability there are three core strands. And if we can but straighten them, wrap them together with regional institutions and sustain our investment in them, I do think that a focus on security, on democracy and strong institutions and on economic growth that is inclusive and that is balanced and that is open for all will make steady and remarkable progress. It is my firm and fond hope that it will not be 25 years until my next visit to East Africa. It is my hope it will be but two or three years at most. And it is my very real hope that after successful, open, free and fair elections in 2013, and after successful implementation of a record MCC compact, and after successful movement towards a more open and robust democratic environment in Uganda, we will see a region that is more integrated, that is more secure, that is more democratic and that has much more opportunity for the people of East Africa.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. : (Off mic.)

MS. COOKE (?): If you'd like to stand there so I – I think, so you can – (inaudible).

SEN. COONS: I think I'm going to take some questions. (Laughter.)

MS. COOKE: I think that's easiest.

SEN. COONS: Please, if you would. Yes, you.

Q: My question is –

SEN. COONS: And could you tell me just your name and where you're from.

Q: (Inaudible) – Shamis Abdulla. I'm a founder of –

SEN. COONS: And we have microphones.

Q: Oh. My name is Shamis Abdulla. I'm a founder of Zanzibar American Diaspora Association –

SEN. COONS: I had a wonderful visit to Zanzibar. (Laughter.)

Q: Yes, thank you. There is a big concern now in Zanzibar about this new constitutional review, which President Kikwete just announced recently –

SEN. COONS: Yes.

Q: – about the voice of Zanzibar would be very much shut. And especially since 1995 there is a big disappointment from mostly Zanzibari academic overseas and the people of Zanzibar about the democracy in Zanzibar. People feel – many people now seeking referendum – Zanzibar to be part of East African community as independent nation. And a lot of people worried about this voice would be shut the same way we had been – like now we see in Egypt is like – it would be no really democracy in the island. As you know, multiparty just came out in Tanzania a few years ago. But, really, America support Zanzibar be part of East African community, if people allowed to vote for referendum?

SEN. COONS: (Off mic.) It's great when these microphones are on, isn't it? (Laughter.) I had the opportunity to visit with Zanzibar's president to be reminded of the long and strong histories, Zanzibar being the second nation to recognize the United States in the early 19th century, and to get a better sense of the distinctions between Zanzibari culture and political traditions and concerns and the mainland. And I do think that very delicate balance between Zanzibar and the rest of Tanzania in a federal republic is a domestic question, is an internal question, but one that must be resolved in free and fair and open processes, and one where referenda and open dialogue and discourse and the democratic process is the best path forward.

Your reference to unfolding events in Egypt is an important one. At a time when the whole region of northern Africa has been lifted up by very real opportunities and prospects for voices to be heard and for democracy to break out, it has also produced some challenges in terms of instability. I think that the best path forward for Zanzibar, for Tanzania and for the region is to also be attentive to the process of democracy and openness, but to development and opportunity. Because millions of young people will not continue to be optimistic and hopeful and engaged and support democratic processes if they don't have both economic opportunity and security. These will be very difficult to deliver in the context of Tunisia and Egypt and other countries, and equally so in Zanzibar and through the federal republic of Tanzania. So thank you for your question. I would expect the United States to support free, fair and open processes to resolve this difficult question that is – was so closely decided in your last elections.

Please, if I – (off mic).

Q: My question is – (inaudible).

SEN. COONS: And who are you and where are you from?

MS. COOKE: Yeah, and if you could wait for the microphone.

SEN. COONS: Although I'm confident we can hear your voice, Joe. (Laughter.)

Q: My name's Joe Anderson. I'm from Capital Research Associates. My question is about South Sudan. First, is South Sudan in any kind of official basis considered part of East Africa? Secondly, if you can comment – and I know you don't have the several hours it would

require – comment on the prospects for South Sudan, and third, what is the U.S. doing and what should we be doing vis-à-vis South Sudan?

SEN. COONS: A great question. Now, one of the first principles, I think, for senators is to say what you don't know. I don't know whether South Sudan is officially considered part of the East African community. I don't think so, but it is so centrally tied through infrastructure and history to Uganda and Kenya, and to Ethiopia and other players in the Horn and in the Great Lakes region, that to neglect to mention it in this context, I think, would have been to overlook a core challenge and opportunity for the region.

I was struck, at a luncheon in Dar es Salaam, to hear strong regional economic players excited about investing in Juba and excited about the prospects for Juba before this recent fight over oil resources. Unfortunately, I think, we've seen the two states sort of locked in a death grip that really threatens to spiral both economies into the ground in a way that is really mutually destructive.

Princeton Lyman, our special envoy, I think has done a remarkable job. I do think there is, of course, critical and unfinished work in implementing the CPA. And again, back to a theme that I wove throughout my remarks, was about the importance of regional institutions. A number of regional governments played a central role in pushing forward a successful referendum, a successful move towards independence for South Sudan, and what should have been a successful resolution to this decades-long conflict. The conflict has reemerged over a couple of key points about borders, about resources, about demilitarization, about revenue that were not resolved in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. And we need those regional players, with the United States' support and assistance, to continue to keep these parties coming back to the table.

The ICC and the impact of indictments, as we just saw play out in Malawi and their decisions about hosting the AU conference, I think is an important piece of this, but it is a difficult piece of this. And there are different opinions across the region about how it has played. I think it is important to hold Bashir and the Khartoum regime to international standards of conduct. But we need consensus in the region, and we need pressure to keep these players at the table and it's my hope that China will continue to play some constructive role in doing so.

I didn't have hours. I hope I gave a brief response.

Please, if we could, over here. I'm just going to try and move across the room.

Q: Thank you, Senator. John Doyle with the 4G WAR blog. Regarding security, one of the three strands that you've used in your very good analogy – (clears throat) – pardon me – the latest Defense Department strategy shift focuses on the Asian-Pacific, and I was wondering what problems that may present for security in Africa and U.S. involvement in that. And more particularly, if I could, I don't think I heard you mention U.S. Africa Command at all – perhaps I missed it – and I'm just wondering if you think they're making any progress in convincing a lot of the people in Africa that they're not some new form of colonialism.

SEN. COONS: I missed it. It wasn't my remarks. I missed a reference to General Ham and his able leadership of AFRICOM, and so I appreciate the opportunity to revisit that topic. I did spend half a day in Kampala and Entebbe visiting with our Special Forces unit that is supporting the multilateral effort to remove Joseph Kony and his lieutenants from the battlefield,

and to strengthen civilian ability to respond and defend against LRA attacks and to deliver some of the regional capabilities also that are relevant to actions by AMISOM in Somalia.

I think one of the great things about AFRICOM is that it provides an opportunity in a strategic way to realign resources and to look at our partnerships with the region. Unlike other combatant commands, it doesn't have significant legacy assets that need to be restructured in this Pacific pivot. It does fit what I think is our emerging security framework, which is one that prefers multilateral action, light footprint by the United States and deploying our unique assets in support of efforts by our allies. It is my hope – in fact, my confidence – that we will not be fighting a major land war in Africa any time soon – hopefully, no time in my lifetime. I don't think if you sat here and interviewed this entire room full of folks in 2000 we would have imagined we would be fighting a decade-long war in Afghanistan and Iraq. And as we reexamine our security profile, both what we need in terms of national security and defense and what we can sustain in terms of national security and defense, I think AFRICOM, which is still wisely predominately based out of Europe rather than in some large base on the continent, offers a way forward to reimagine our engagement with lots of theaters around the world, whether it's South America or Southeast Asia or the continent of Africa. It will take time to persuade African leaders and African communities that AFRICOM is not on its way towards being a combatant command like CENTCOM or like other combatant commands, that it really is designed to facilitate partnership between development, diplomacy and defense, and to work in partnership with and in support of our regional allies as they – as they pursue security missions that also facilitate the national security of the United States.

Please.

Q: Thank you. I'm Emily Greenspan. I'm with Oxfam. And you mentioned the relevance of the extractive industries on the continent, and I was wondering if you could talk a little bit more about what the U.S. government, and perhaps, EU could do to promote transparency and good governance in the extractive industry.

SEN. COONS: There is, as you know, an extractive industries initiative that is trying to deploy the lessons of a number of countries – Norway not least among them – that has succeeded in harnessing significant natural resources, particularly in oil and gas, in a way that builds sustainable resources for the nation to deal with education and health and water and infrastructure. Norway has no problems with water. I mean the problems that many other developing countries face.

There have been significant gas discoveries off of Tanzania. There are some potentially promising oil discoveries in Kenya and in Uganda. And in all three cases, I think it's critical that they be developed in a way that is environmentally responsible, that is sustainable and that contributes to the long-term security of the nations. And there are, sadly, counterexamples not just on the continent but around the world, of countries where those resources did not contribute to strengthening the health and the education and the welfare of their countries, so I do think that the EU and the United States has an absolutely central role to play here. We should not shy from a values agenda that says that it is our belief that transparency and democracy, a predictable rule of law, an accountable government, an inclusive economic system is the best path forward. And we have competitors, vigorous competitors, who are increasingly visible, in some cases dominant in Africa, who do not put those values, priorities at the fore as they seek development

partnerships. And I think we need to continue to stand for what I believe is ultimately in the best interests of human societies.

Democracy is not an American idea. It was a Greek idea. And they're demonstrating just how robustly they can engage in democracy here on a regular basis. (Laughter.) And African nations and societies have to develop and deliver their own solutions, but I do think transparency, accountability and inclusivity in governance and democracy and security are absolutely essential. And as those new resources are developed and exploited, we have a critical role to play in ensuring they're done in an appropriate way.

Please.

MS. COOKE: Senator, we have time for two more questions.

Q: (Off mic.) My question is, of all you saw in Kenya, what worried you the most, and how do you see U.S. policy addressing it?

SEN. COONS: What worried me the most: There are constant, unrelenting pressures from economic growth, from population growth that – so just as there have been dramatic – there's been dramatic progress across the region – in Zanzibar in malaria, for example – in improving child health and child health outcomes, in fighting the scourge of HIV/AIDS across the region and the continent, we have invested billions of dollars in these elements of the global health initiative.

As we've made progress, there's also been demographic shifts and economic shifts that rob the promise of that progress. There is continued urbanization; Nairobi is even bigger, even more sprawling, even more dense, and the efforts of the government to deliver on infrastructure are barely keeping up with it – really not keeping up with it. And that's true across all three – across Kampala and Nairobi and Dar.

In all three countries, we also got to go – we went north to Gulu to look at LRA recovery, we went to Eldoret to look at some of the post-2007-2008 election violence recovery effort – a great group, Youth We Can – and to look at an agriculture research station.

So I'm conscious of the tension between rural and urban. But urban areas are areas where traditional culture is lost – where there is an opportunity for insecurity bred of hopelessness and of density. There is also great opportunity. There are huge masses of young people who, with education, with opportunity, could be engaged in delivering that enormous opportunity forward. But we are in a race against time. And if the institutions of governance in Nairobi and in the country of Kenya are not improved upon, if this next election is not one in which the people can have confidence, I am very worried about the prospects for the people of Kenya. A lot of the violence in 2007, 2008 was because there was no confidence in the judiciary. The United States had a comparably close election in 2000, where it was decided by 500 hanging chads in Florida, and then ultimately by our Supreme Court by one vote. It took us more than 200 years, a very divisive and difficult and painful civil war and lots of other contests to get to a place where we have any confidence in our system. It is not easy. And it is perhaps expecting too much to expect a robust and independent judiciary that can stand in the torrential winds of a divisive election. But I was impressed with the strength and determination of many of the national leaders in Kenya who are trying to make that progress in this race against time.

Please, if I could. One last question – (inaudible). OK. And then we begin the vote-orama on the farm bill, which will dominate the rest of the day. (Laughter.)

MS. COOKE: Why don't you stay a little longer? (Laughter.)

Q: Nguju of – (inaudible) – Professionals of Nigeria. Yeah, I was in Arusha a few weeks ago for the ADB meetings and I can say that what you said about Tanzania is true. But the point I'm going to look at is with regards to demonstration effect, you know, in Africa or sub-Saharan Africa. Look at Rwanda has done well, and then Botswana is doing all right. But one country, even though is not in East Africa, which if they really get their acts together, would be a good example to rest of sub-Saharan Africa is Nigeria. So I want to find out whether you've been to Nigeria recent, or whether you have any plans of coming to Nigeria, because I think there's a lot you could be able to do there. Thank you.

SEN. COONS: Yes, absolutely. The question essentially is have I been to Nigeria, do I recognize its global importance and am I hopeful for its prospects? Yes. In fact, my first trip to Africa as the chair of the subcommittee was with Senator Isakson. We went to Nigeria, Benin and Ghana. And there are enormously hopeful developments across the continent. Botswana, for example, is one country that harnessed remarkable natural resources in its diamonds and has managed to sustain a significant double-digit growth, a multiparty democracy, a robust society, and has begun to take over a partnership in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We've been able to build, in partnership with the Botswana government, strong institutions and systems.

The outcomes of the last Nigerian elections were hugely encouraging. The role that the electoral commission played, the role that the judiciary and that some national leadership were able to play in ensuring a free and fair election, I think, were absolutely inspiring. And in the West African community, the outcomes in Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria are bending in the right direction.

Not to be overlooked is Benin, which for decades really struggled with poor governance and with enormous institutional difficulties, and today has had several free and fair elections, is an MCC partner and is a potential real development leader in the West African region.

But Nigeria, along with Kenya and South Africa, is really one of the three absolute linchpins of the continent. Its strength, its movement towards transparency in extractive industries, towards a strong and robust and independent legislative structure at the state level and then federally, and a successful press and judiciary. If these things happen, if the initial promise of Goodluck Jonathan's administration is delivered upon, if the north is included in development opportunities and the north-south tensions are addressed, there's no limit to how important and powerful a regional leader and a global leader Nigeria can be.

Much like Kenya, it is at a tipping point, where movement in those directions is essential. And much like all three of the countries I referenced, there are values issues around transparency, a commitment to democracy and an ability to have an inclusive economy that are essential; that if we can make progress together towards them, we can make an enduring difference for the whole continent.

I recently met with the Nigerian ambassador and have every intention of returning to Nigeria should I continue to be able to serve in our own Senate. (Laughter.) And let me close on this point. The Nigerian diaspora community, the Kenyan diaspora community, the Liberian diaspora community in my own home state of Delaware is strong and is enthusiastic about partnering in making entrepreneurship possible, in investing in their nations of origin.

And this is an opportunity we should not miss. It is part of the presidential policy directive. But one of our great strengths as a country is that we have welcomed and included peoples from all over the world, and we should be engaging with diaspora communities from Tunisia and Egypt, from South Africa and Nigeria, from Kenya and Tanzania in a way that allows us to use some of America's strengths – its openness, its tolerance, its entrepreneurship, its creativity and its education. If we do all that, if we take advantage of all of these strengths and opportunities, I am very optimistic about the possibilities for our partnership, for this decade and for the century.

Thank you very much. Thanks for the chance to be with you. (Applause.)

MS. : (Inaudible.)

MS. COOKE: Yes. (Chuckles.) Yes.

Just very quickly, Senator, thank you so much for what covered, I think, so much but in very concrete ways and meaningful ways. I think everyone here will join me in being very impressed, for one, but also very glad for your leadership in the Senate and that voice in the Senate, with Senator Isakson, making the case for Africa.

So please thank me, and we'll let you go to the – (inaudible). (Applause.)

(END)