

Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT  
Online Event

**“Prioritizing Partnerships with Africa”**

DATE  
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FEATURING  
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*Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs,  
U.S. Department of State*

**Koji Yonetani**  
*Assistant Minister, Director-General of African Department, Secretary-General for TICAD8,  
Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**Raychelle Omamo**  
*Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**Hilda Suka-Mafudze**  
*African Union Ambassador to the U.S.*

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Mvemba Phezo  
Dizolele:

Ladies and gentlemen, good morning and welcome to this event on Privatizing Partnerships with Africa. We are delighted that you could join us for this important discussion. My name is Mvemba Phezo Dizolele. I am a senior fellow and the director of the Africa Program here at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. This event is made possible through a partnership with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. for their generous support.

I'm honored to welcome our distinguished panelists this morning as well. Ambassador Koji Yonetani, assistant minister for African affairs in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Hilda Suka-Mafudze, permanent representative of the African Union to the United States. Ambassador Raychelle Omamo, cabinet secretary for foreign affairs of the Republic of Kenya. And Ambassador Robert Scott, United States deputy assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

From human and mineral resources to climate change and security, Africa's aggregate contribution to the welfare of the world has never been more evident. Yet, despite the resources, as a bloc, African countries struggle to assert themselves as key players and partners in world affairs. At CSIS, we strive to bridge the policy gap between the strategic and economic interests of industrialized nations and those of African countries, particularly as related to the aspirations of the populations and the high demand for better governance. In recent years, we have noted a heightened interest in summitry with regard to Africa. From China to Brazil, from Turkey to Germany to Russia, from France to the United States to Japan, and the Gulf Arab states, to name but a few examples, each country that can afford it either hosts an African summit or embarks on an Africa charm offensive.

So we ask a few questions, including, one, does this engagement approach through summit promote win-win outcomes, particularly in the areas of economic growth, human security, and peace and stability? And then, two, what do African countries want? And to what extent do they benefit from the summit model? These are some of the questions our panelists will address today.

Let me take a couple seconds to lay out our agenda this morning. I will introduce our distinguished panelists, after which they will each have three minutes to make their remarks. Then as the moderator I will have a conversation with the panel, an exchange about the various topics that we raise, and then finally we'll open the lines for questions from the audience. Members of the audience, you can ask your question on the "questions from the audience" link on the event page.

So let me introduce our audience now, that we can start our presentation. Or, actually, give me a minute.

So Ambassador Koji Yonetani is the assistant minister for African affairs in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Previously, Ambassador Yonetani served as the deputy assistant minister for global issues within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A foreign service professional with over 30 years of experience, Ambassador Yonetani previously served as Japan's ambassador to Djibouti between 2007 and 2017, please, and 2020, as well as the vice president of the Japan external trade organization between 2015 and 2017. He also previously served as the director for international property, for cultural exchange, and for public diplomacy strategy within the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Council for Development Finance within the Japanese Ministry of Finance.

Ambassador Hilda Suka-Mafudze is the permanent representative of the African Union to the United States. Her core mandate is to enhance and maintain existing bilateral ties. A career diplomat with experience that spans the African continent, Ambassador Suka-Mafudze assumed her most recent duties on November 2nd, 2020. Prior to coming to the United States, she helped lead diplomacy for more than two decades in a variety of top government positions in her home in Zimbabwe. Well-known as, I quote, "a quiet champion of democracy," Ambassador Suka-Mafudze held ambassadorial positions representing the country in Khartoum, Sudan, and South Sudan between 2010 and 2019, and most recently in the Republic of Malawi.

Ambassador Raychelle Omamo is the cabinet secretary for foreign affairs of the Republic of Kenya. Prior to her appointment, she served as the cabinet secretary of defense and chairperson of defense council between April 2013 and January 2020. Ambassador Omamo had previously – has previously represented Kenya as ambassador to France, with accreditation to Spain, Portugal, the Holy See, and Serbia; and as permanent representative to UNESCO from 2003 to 2009.

Ambassador Robert Scott currently serves as the deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs, covering peace and security affairs and public diplomacy and public affairs. He was previously the ambassador to the United States – of the United States – pardon me – to the Republic of Malawi from 2019 to 2021. He has also served as acting deputy assistant secretary, covering West Africa in economic and regional affairs. Previously, he served as the deputy chief of mission in Zimbabwe and Tanzania and is the deputy office director for West African affairs. Other overseas tours include Ukraine, Germany, France, Ghana, and domestic assignments working on climate change and European security issues.

So welcome, panelists. We will now move to the phase of our conversation now that I've introduced everyone. So let us start with – let us start with Secretary Raychelle Omamo, and then Ambassador Suka-Mafudze, then Ambassador Scott, then finally Ambassador Yonetani. We would like to hear your views on why it is critical to prioritize partnerships with African countries, considering the global demand – the growing global demand for Africa's resources and Africa's important role in managing climate change and migration. Are the continent's current partnerships adequate? What type of partnerships are mutually beneficial? How are these partnerships changing in the time of COVID-19?

Cabinet Secretary Omamo, please.

Secretary  
Raychelle  
Omamo:

First let me thank CSIS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for convening this discussion that is actually quite critical as we look at the future in terms of how the world will reorganize itself post-COVID-19. In our judgement partnerships are necessary for Africa. We live in an interconnected world driven by globalization, by technological change. In addition, the threats that we are confronting – be they climate change, COVID-19, terrorism – are all cross-border and transnational in nature. And therefore, they require collaboration and partnership to surmount. And therefore, Africa cannot be an island. Africa must reach out to friends. Africa must collaborate for its own future.

What COVID-19, however, exposed was the inequalities in our world. And it was starkly clear that Africa remains on the periphery of the global economic order. We are only contributing about 3 percent of world trade. We realize in Africa, in the throes of COVID-19, that we don't make enough. That we are not industrialized. And that we have very little control over global supply chains. And therefore, we need new partnerships that will fundamentally change Africa's integration into the world market. Africa can no longer be that continent that is simply there to produce raw materials for others, where its best talent is drained out of the continent, and our markets are jam-packed with finished goods from abroad.

So we need partnerships and we must insist on partnerships that invest in people, that avail knowledge and technological transfer, that construct infrastructure, that help us strength our public health infrastructure, education infrastructure, and help Africa become more self-reliant and enable Africa to foster inter-Africa trade. Inter-Africa trade is the future. And I think the Africa Continental Free Trade Area is critical in this regard. Africa is rising. There are still sad and difficult stories coming out of Africa, but there's also an Africa that showed that it could innovate in the challenges posed by COVID-19. Africans were suddenly making things, making ventilators, making syringes, making hospital equipment.

It shows that our potential is latent, and we need to unlock it. And the only way to unlock Africa's potential is through partnerships that speak to our needs, that speak to our aspirations, that speak to our agenda. Africans must stand up and begin to speak for themselves in a united way to be able to embrace and benefit from green transition, digital transition, to foster an increased development and economic prosperity. We can no longer have business as usual. And it's time for us to wake up and understand who we are, where we can go, and change the way in which we're integrated into the economic order.

So that is what I'd say for now. I know there are other issues that I could raise, but I really would like to raise this because these issues became so clear to us during COVID-19. COVID-19 was a wakeup call for Africa to industrialize and change. I thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you, Madam Cabinet Secretary.

Ambassador Suka-Mafudze, please.

Ambassador Hilda Suka-Mafudze: Thank you. Thank you very much for this opportunity to put the voice of Africa on the map. Allow me at the outset to thank the Center for Strategic and International Studies for convening this important event on Africa's partnerships, and to commend you, Mr. Director, for the choice of this important theme. I would want to also take this opportunity to thank the government of Japan for this forum. I want also to congratulate you, your appointment as the head of the African Program, and look forward to working with you to advance U.S.-Africa shared priorities and interests.

Your question on why it is critical to prioritize partnership with African country and the African Union, I want to add to your question. The director – the direct answer to your question is Africa and the African Union matter. Africa is strategically important to global and regional security and prosperity. Nothing can be achieved today and in the future without Africa being around the table. There is a clear realization that Africa has much to offer. And this value proposition of the continent is widely shared. The continent endowments, representing a beautiful and dynamic population, the potential unleashed by the women's empowerment, the urbanization, and natural resources – land, minerals, energy, and the marine resources bode well for the present and the future of this world which you are living in.

Africa today is an important and active partner, rather than a reactive actor in the international arena. The continent has a vision through its transformational Agenda 2063, where Africa spares no effort to be united, which my sister also mentioned, united, resilient, and influential global player. As you know very well, Africa since the establishment of our premier opportunity organization, the Organization of African Unity in 1963, the

continent has established various engagements and different types of cooperation arrangements with countries in other regional intergovernmental organizations. We have seen in the two – in the last two decades our partnerships being diversified, deepened, broadened in the scope of their engagement.

Just to mention, the Africa-Arab Partnership established in 1977, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD, in 1993, the African Union-European Union Partnership in 2000, the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation also in 2000, and the African-Indian – Africa-Indian and Africa-Turkey in 2008. Africa is now at the center, and not at the periphery, of our pattern of trade, investment, and development policies. The majority of them have developed their full-fledged policies towards Africa. I want to underscore also the instrumental and leadership role of the African Union, through its operational arm the African Union Commission in its engagement with external partners.

As you know, the AU, by virtue of this mandate, promotes and defends the African common position, the policy frameworks, and is driving the African integration and development process in close collaboration with its member states, the regional economic communities, and African citizens. An Africa that is stable, secure, integrated, prosperous, and resilient is in the interest not only of us, as Africans, but also of the whole world. Regarding your question whether Africa's current partnerships are adequate or sufficient, my direct question is that there is definitely room for enhancing their effectiveness. The African Union and its member states even agreed to realign the focus of Africa's partnerships towards our continent's priorities, not least the implementation of the Agenda 2063 flagship programs.

On what type of partnerships are mutually beneficial, I would like to underscore that any partnership has to be mutually beneficial and should be conducted in the spirit of trust, equality, and mutual respect, efficiency, and consistency, based on the comparative advantage and the value addition of each partner. The global pandemic has underscored the critical importance of promoting greater multilateral and regional cooperation to address the challenges of health security, poverty, climate challenge, the regional approaches working around common purposes, and specific shared priorities as undertaken by the African Union is increasingly vital, that complements the bilateral and the multilateral ones out there. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Ambassador Suka-Mafudze.

Now, Ambassador Scott, the floor is yours.

Robert Scott: Thank you so much. First, I'd like to join other speakers in thanking CSIS and Director Dizolele for the opportunity to speak. I'd already made some notes,

just based on the first two presentations, which change my approach a bit. It just underlines how complex, and wide, and broad this topic is. But I strongly agree that what we're looking at now is a partnership which is evolving, which needs to evolve. Because of COVID-19 as a driver, but also because of other drivers – youth, economic growth needs, the private sector, how do we engage with each other. All of these things are being looked at constantly.

Let me just tell you initially that when Secretary Blinken went on his first trip to Africa back in November, and he visited Kenya, and Nigeria, and Senegal, that he acknowledged in his speech at ECOWAS in Abuja that if we expect or want global foreign policy priorities of interest to the United States to move forward in partnership, that certainly we cannot do that without African governments, institutions, and peoples. He was very upfront about that. Just to quote him, "Africa will shape the future, and not just the future of the people of Africa, but of the world." That acknowledges the enormous impact of the growth in population and the potential for the economy of the continent to grow, and also the impact of culture and other areas globally.

To become a little bit more specific, I think to cite some areas of partnership I know that when the secretary was in Kenya, for instance, his conversations were bilateral in nature, but also talked about our partnership with Kenya regionally and on the continent. And all of his discussions with heads of state and ministers of foreign affairs focused on that, that we no longer, as the minister said to begin, can take a look at these things in isolation. But if we don't work together, none of us will move forward in our – in our areas of interest. So I think that that's important.

I would just complete, finish by focusing a little bit away from government to government. We tend to be very focused, obviously, since I represent a government, that we're looking at government to government relationships as far as speaking about partnerships. I think a very important part of what we do as governments together is to allow, for instance, private sector development. How do we ensure that our private sectors are working together? Growth on the continent will not be driven by assistance. Foreign direct investment waves have far outpaced any bilateral or multilateral assistance. So the focus for us needs to be how do we ensure that our private sectors are talking together, are engaged, and are doing business together?

And I would just add to that also universities. We need to – there are a lot of other actors who are active between our countries and between continents. And I think it's incumbent on us as governments and other institutions to enhance that cooperation, to make sure that those partnerships are thriving, because those are also very direct, have a lot of impact, and are very important to our mutual future. With that, thank you.

Mr. Dizolele:

Thank you, DAS Scott.

Ambassador Yonetani, please.

Koji Yonetani: Yes. Thank you. And thank you, Director Dizolele. I'd like to start by expressing my deep appreciation to the CSIS and the moderator, Dr. Dizolele. And it's a great honor for me to be a part of this prominent panel.

So let me just briefly start by – just touch upon the launching period of TICAD that started in 1993. At that time, that was a time after the demise of the Cold War, the attention of the international community had move away from Africa. So the initial objective for us in holding the TICAD was to reinvigorate the focus of the international community on the issues of development of the African continent. However, time has changed. Now various countries around the world are looking at Africa for its huge potential.

On the other hand, the multiplication of partnerships does not necessarily solve the fundamental problems, the fundamental challenges. It is true that we have seen relatively high economic growth in Africa since the beginning of the century, but debt burdens have grown, the economic structures in many places remained dependent on resources. So the vulnerabilities has become more visible under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We believe that Africa has a big potential to become the driving force of global prosperity. However, there is a need of empowering people and of realizing structural change. We know that such change are possible when desired and implemented by African leaders and people. African ownership is the basic principle shared through the TICAD process. And this is why we underscore the importance for the international partners to support the African-led development process.

I would like to stress – join other panelists to stress that development of Africa, building resilient, stable, and prosperous society in African continent, is indispensable for realizing the peaceful world. This is why Japan is continuously supporting the capacity development in African countries, in view of contributing to the long-term sustainable development.

If I just mention one example, in Kenya, KEMRI, Kenya Medical Research Institute, which is the focal point for research collaboration in Africa. And this institute is playing a key role in the fight against COVID-19. I'm pleased that we have been working in collaboration since the establishment of this institute in the 1980s. It is a good example, I believe, where the real commitment of stakeholders was demonstrated. And that has led to the building of an institutional capacity and its human resources development.

This is just one example. I believe at different levels, such as communities, countries, sub-regions, and even at the continental level, we are very much encouraged when we see a growing willingness and various initiatives to change the situation to build the future. I believe that our basic approach that we take in TICAD, putting emphasis on capacity development, is increasingly – is increasing its relevance in responding to the challenges of the post-pandemic world. So I'll stop there for the moment, and thank you very much.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Ambassador Yonetani. And I thank everyone on the panel.

We will now move to our second segment of this discussion, where we'll focus on the three main topics, the themes of economic growth, human security, and peace and stability. For this segment, to my distinguished panelists, if we can actually take no more than two minutes in our responses so we can have more time with questions from the audience. I will start with Ambassador Yonetani.

TICAD, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2023, next year. TICAD is one of Japan's flagship engagement platforms with Africa. TICAD 8, to be held this year, will be the first TICAD after the emergency of COVID-19 – after the emergence of COVID-19, excuse me. How does Japan view summitry? How do you identify your priorities in the areas of economic growth, humanity, human security, and peace and stability? Please, no more than two minutes, Ambassador.

Mr. Yonetani: (Laughs.) Thank you very much. I'll try to be very brief. In fact, TICAD later this year will be an important opportunity for us to try to set out a pathway for African development in the post-COVID-19 era. So the first theme of economy, we believe that in order to realize a better recovery from the pandemic, we need to look for larger role, larger – bigger role for the private sector in pursuit of Agenda 2063, and the SDGs. We would like to look at the African initiatives, such as African Continental Free Trade Area, which is a historical step for regional integration, and it's an example of political work to realize a structural change and, therefore, would like to reflect on how we can accompany the process.

Another element that is emerging is startups. Young entrepreneurs who are becoming more visible and tackling to solve a lot of social challenges. Japan, through our JICA development agency, we are supporting startups in Africa through its new project called NINJA, Next Innovation with Japan. And of course, like our colleagues – other panelists have mentioned, digital transformation, green decarbonization, those are the new elements presenting opportunities for growth in Africa. So that's about economy. About social issues, of course, we believe that health – strengthening health

system, an effort to promote, achieve universal health coverage, that's increasing in importance, together with other issues – sectors, like education or environment.

And finally, peace and stability challenges are becoming bigger in many parts of the continent. Japan has put forward our concept of NAPSA, New Approach for the Peace and Stability of Africa, at the G-7. The basic principle here, again, respecting African ownership in the effort of peacebuilding and addressing the root cause of instability. So in conclusion, TICAD 8 is really an opportunity to forge a shared strategy, not only for a better recovery from the pandemic, but also for creating a future with a longer perspective, building on the huge potential, and putting the willingness and ideas of African people at the center of the discussion. So that's our idea. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Ambassador Yonetani.

Ambassador Suka-Mafudze, the African Union and its commission are responsible for coordinating Africa's continental engagement. Looking at your role specifically, it is a tall order to strengthen relationship between United States and all 55 AU member countries. Based on your experience, what are some lessons for foreign partners about how to best foster relationships with the continent based on trust and mutual accountability, which you had referred to earlier, and what do African countries want from their relationships? Not just substance-wise, but with regard to structure and style? Please two minutes – no more than two minutes.

Amb. Suka-Mafudze: I will try the two minutes, Director. Thank you. If you'll allow me, I want to take this opportunity to commend the Biden-Harris – out of that question that you asked, I would want to commend the Biden-Harris administration for their engagement, for rebuilding a strategic partnership between the United States of America and Africa based on our shared values and common interests. The second U.S.-African Leaders Summit announced by the U.S. administration is a strong testimony of this commitment. We are all confident that – confident that it will energize our diplomatic engagement, reinvigorate our cooperation. I hope the U.S.-Africa Summit will be institutionalized and it becomes an important pillar and instrument in our toolbox that reflects the uniqueness of U.S.-Africa relations.

To respond to your important question, for any partnership to be sustainable it has to be built on the identification of specific objectives would be predetermined in tangible win-win outcomes for the mutual benefit of all the parties involved. I would say that is what the governments would want at the end of the day. It entails strategic planning based on commonly defined priorities, as well as the necessity to define the implementation, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In a tangible plan of action, the

strategic partnerships should also be aligned with Africa's development priorities and strategies as enshrined in the AU Agenda 2063.

It have to take into account Africa's priorities, and focus on areas that will unleash the continent's potential. Investment in people, industrialization, intra-Africa trade, regional integration, infrastructure development are areas in which our partners would help the continent achieve this transformation. Africa is a continent of framings, policies, and strategies in virtually every area of importance to our partners, who also do not start on a clean slate, as you know.

It is important to strive to ensure that all the new ideas to be presented in any partnership shall be built on the existing mechanisms priorities and initiatives in place and agreed by African heads of state and the government. Their approach has to be inclusive, participative, as I said in the beginning, and conducted in the spirit of trust, equality, ownership, mutual respect. And at the substance level, it has to be visionary in the strategy, supporting regional and continental initiatives so that they benefit Africans in sustainable – it benefits the Africans in a sustainable manner. Thank you, Director.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Ambassador Suka-Mafudze.

Now let's move to our DAS Scott. How is the Biden administration thinking about engagement with Africa within the three issues of economic growth, human security, and peace and stability? During his recent trip to the region, to which you referred earlier, Secretary Anthony Blinken visited innovation hubs and stressed the need for partnerships. How does the United States reimagine its engagement with Africa so that the partnerships meet the needs of the continent's most important resource, the youth? How do we go beyond YALI? Thank you, DAS Scott.

Mr. Scott: OK. I'll try it two minutes. Thank you so much. First, coming back to YALI, so that's the Mandela Washington Fellowship, of which we are incredibly proud here at the State Department. If I can just touch on it, although we go beyond YALI, let me just do very quickly about YALI. We've had 5,000 incredibly dynamic young African fellows come to the United States on this program. We've had another 20,000 participate in the program in hubs in Africa. And we have 650,000 people involved in an online network – YALI network. So it's a very powerful tool for us that spreads across all of Africa. When I traveled to Malawi, I would meet Mandela Washington fellows throughout the country. And they're all doing incredible things. So just really quickly on YALI.

To your question, let me come back very quickly to something that Minister Omamo said about value addition early on. I think to talk about Secretary

Blinken's trip, when he was in Senegal, he visited the – or, referenced the Pasteur Institute. And the United States, through the Development Finance Corporation, is providing assistance in both Senegal and South Africa to enable locations there to manufacture vaccines, not just the importation or the provision of vaccines. And incredibly important to capture that value on the continent. We absolutely agree with that and are supporting that financially. We're also proud that we provided 111 million doses of vaccine and \$1.9 billion to counter the COVID threat.

But moving on, about economic development and human security, I think what we're looking at currently is also a real focus on infrastructure, to allow people in the continent, on the continent to have what they need to build businesses, to access markets, whether they're domestic or international. Through Power Africa we've hooked up to 88 million people into electric grids. And through our Prosper Africa program, we've generated \$47 billion in trade between the two countries. And we're going to continue on that. That's incredibly important to us, to allow, you know, citizens of countries in Africa, by supporting their institutions, to allow them to access these services to grow their economies and to have that potential. Because as was also stated, the root causes of instability are usually economic and social deprivation. And so we all need to work in that area to ensure that peace and security are available.

I think I'm probably past my two minutes, but I would welcome questions. This is an incredibly important topic, obviously. And I hope I've provided some answers to your questions. Thank you so much.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, DAS Scott.

I think we – I think we're doing OK. We still have some remarks to hear from Secretary Omamo, so I think we'll be on time. So thank you for trying to stay to the two minutes.

Secretary Omamo, these days it seems like every country that is seeking market expansion hosts an African summit, including Russia, and China. Other such as Turkey, Israel, and the Gulf Arab states are blazing their own trails into Africa. How does this benefit Africa? And which challenges does it present? Are African countries – what are African countries looking for? Thank you.

Sec. Omamo: Thank you for this question, which is important. I think on a positive note these summits demonstrate the increasing value of African in the world order in terms of its potential markets, its vast resources, and even its political clout in the multilateral arena. But on the negative side, I think that these summits are also a realization that if you ignore Africa's problems – it's poverty, its insecurity – these problems will be transferred across borders.

And we're seeing this quite graphically in the shape of uncontrolled migration. So it is – it is important to look at these summits as both looking at Africa's potential, and also looking at Africa for the challenges that it presents to some of these countries.

Now, these summits, I think, provide opportunities to build viable partnership, but we've got to understand that their proliferation should not give rise to a new scramble for Africa. We don't want African Balkanized. We don't want it fragmented, because fragmentation exacerbates poverty and reverses good governance gains that have been acquired by Africa over time through sweat and tears. So these summits must be useful to Africa. They must be forums where we define Africa's needs, we zero down on Africa's aspirations, as defined in Agenda 2063. And that we avoid duplication, we avoid redundancy, and we encourage the internal cooperation within Africa itself.

What we want to see are these summits building internal African cooperation through its ranks so that we can see a translation of change on the ground. These summits must produce programs that help strengthen our public health infrastructure, education institutions. They must build infrastructure, whether it's roads, or energy supply systems. They must strengthen governance and state capacity and help us silence the guns, and also ensure that we integrate women into governance and into all aspects of our societies. But they must primarily focus on our young people.

This is Africa's biggest challenge. If we do not focus on the youth bulge, if we do not embrace our young people, provide them with opportunities, make use of their innovations, then all the gains that we are achieving in Africa will come to naught. We must bring our young people into the center. And this is a message I would like to send to all those who wish to engage with Africa. Africa is about young people. It's about real people. And everything that we do must be about uplifting and empowering them. I thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Cabinet Secretary Omamo. And thank you again to our panelists for indulging me and reducing your time. I think this is for the greater good for our audience, particularly who will have questions for you.

The first question says: It seems like the international community thinks it has a lot to teach Africa, but I think it's the other way around. What can Africa teach the international community? What about experience with truth and reconciliation commissions, anti-piracy efforts, or robust civil society networks? The floor is open for any of you who would like to take the question. Thank you.

Sec. Omamo: Well, let me –

Mr. Scott: If I can –

Sec. Omamo: Go ahead.

Mr. Scott: Just real quickly, just an example of this. I would want to – you know, youth has been mentioned. I will give you examples of young Africans coming to universities in the United States and bringing with them incredible stories of challenges with governance, of challenges with economic entrepreneurship for themselves, and engaging in conversations on campuses here with their cohorts and their counterparts at universities across the United States.

And what you see is the breadth and the depth of the thought that's behind them in talking about these challenges that have been mentioned. I've participated in several of these conversations, and I will tell you that American students learn an immeasurable amount from the students who they encounter from Africa. The sophistication of their thoughts about politics, about governance, about how societies arrange themselves, about economic opportunity for youth. So I just wanted to provide that as one example of a transfer of knowledge and experience that I've witnessed myself. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much. Ambassador Yonetani, would you like to answer the question?

Mr. Yonetani: Thank you. Yes, thank you. No, just I would like to reiterate that our starting point should be the Africans who should be at the driver's seat. That's the principle of TICAD. And we are exchanging how we can work together to move forward in the direction that African people, African leaders would like to make their future. So that's the basic approach. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much. There's another question in the pipeline here. To what extent are African governments encouraging African entrepreneurs to invest in manufacturing to take advantage of the all-Africa free trade area? So this, I think, will go to our African representatives. If Ambassador Suka-Mafudze can start, and then, Cabinet Secretary, we'll come to you.

Amb. Suka-Mafudze: OK. Thank you. I would like to say there's a lot. There are so many moving parts on the continent at the moment, considering the fact that Africa is going – is going through major transformation in the last two decades. And as I mentioned in my presentation at first, to think we have come together as the whole of the continent, the 55 member states, on what we want to happen, on what we are demanding at the end of the day, it's to say to the international community: Africa has to have a seat at the center of the decision making of the world. They cannot do without Africa.

In fact, looking at what Scott has said – Robert has said also in the area for academics, I would also say there are also other challenges that without involvement of Africa, without putting Africa at the center of this decision, looking at this demography of younger people, and also looking at the challenges that have bedeviled Africa, especially when I talk of piracy, it affected the world. I talk of immigration. If in the EU it had to change – it had to change its policy, migration policy.

So all those things make us get in the – let the people who know we are, and that to say the time is now. Africa is open for business. And with this African Continental Free Trade area that we are talking about, it's filtering into the people on the ground. We have the youth that we're giving priority on this African Continental Free Trade Area. And the women who do cross border trade. And I would say, your governments are involved at the moment with the move that you are taking on the African Continental Free Trade Area.

I would say the Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade area was here in the U.S., but he has spent time on the continent from the time he was appointed to ensure this filters in each and every government so that they get it also down to the people, and have this issue of entrepreneurship be the thing. We are saying it's now not the raw material to leave that continent. We have to do valid addition. And so that we build on employment of our people at the end of the day. I think I've done enough. (Laughs.) I've mentioned enough.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you, Ambassador Suka-Mafudze.

Cabinet Secretary Omamo, please.

Sec. Omamo: I think that if we want to build youth entrepreneurship and to build manufacturing on the continent, driven by young people, then governments need to have policies that are directed to those objectives and partnerships that will help reinforce those objectives. Of critical importance to our young people is financial access. Many of our young people don't have finances. And so in our country, for example, we have established youth funds to help young people establish businesses.

But establishing businesses is not enough. People need to have skills. And therefore, we need to work at skilling, at reskilling and upskilling African youth to enable them to make things, to innovate, to put their hands to work. To enable them to manufacture goods. You can't manufacture goods unless you're skilled. And so it's important that we also look at our education system, look at our technical colleges, and ask ourselves whether we're really addressing the needs of our young people in terms of their skill and capacity.

And finally, our young people, after they have made their products, need access to markets. Not only locally, within our countries or without our regions, but internationally. And so the challenge here is nontariff barriers or tariff barriers that prevent them from exporting their goods, and also the challenge of the dumping of substandard goods on our continent that make the goods and equipment that our young people produce so expensive that nobody wants to buy them.

We need to look at this issue holistically if we're really going to put the innovation of our young people to work. We need to be serious. We need to be focused. And like our colleague from the United States said, we need to look beyond government. We need to look at the private sector, the academia, civil society. It needs to be all hands on deck to get manufacturing and youth innovation going on the continent. I thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much.

Ambassador Yonetani or DAS Scott, would either one of you want to join?

Mr. Yonetani: Just let me add that I think we have concrete ways to address those necessary policy measures taken by African governments to reinforce those initiatives. And we are trying to accompany some of those measures, like in strengthening skills, vocation – implementing vocational training. But that should be adaptive to the needs of the private sector, the needs of the industry. So we are doing this skill – vocational skill training in a sort of private-public – public-private partnership, and engaging multilateral institutions also.

Access to market, external market particularly, there is a need for strengthening connectivity, including infrastructure, and facilitating the administration procedure and order. So we are working on cross-border system. So those are just a couple of examples that we can work concretely, and we continue on that. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much, Ambassador Yonetani.

DAS Scott.

Mr. Scott: Yeah, no, I agree. I think, you know, there are programs that we all do. We have an Academy of Women Entrepreneurs, 2,000 young women, trained, provided resources. But ultimately, it's going to be about markets, as the minister said. You know, access to market, whether domestic or international. And I think, you know, we have the AGOA program. I think it's done some very good things. I think it can be built upon. You know, how does one take the best advantage of AGOA? And that's an ongoing discussion that we continue to engage in. So I think that that's that on the macro level.

I think just real quickly, if I could, you know, it's growing the economies. And I just want to give a real quick example if I can. In Malawi, again just going back to Malawi, we had \$350 million in an MCC program for power infrastructure. And that was good. But in order to take advantage of that, we also now have had those Development Finance Corporation finance a 26-megawatt solar power plant, which is green energy. And it'll be the first private sector plant that feeds into the national power grid. So you have the private sector, what the minister mentioned, coming into a market that the private sector had not been involved in before.

And now what's the next step? Good regulation and purchasing. So there's a single buyer unit to make sure that the cost to the people of Malawi is fair and adequate. And we're trying to provide resources for regulators and costing experts to make sure that that works. So it's this entire chain that we see that ultimately will provide for these economies in which the youth can step out, because it has to be overall growth within the entire economy, which will enable the youth to take advantage of that. Trying to just focus on youth, if the economy itself is not growing, you know, hampers them. And so I think that that's an important point. Thank you for letting me go on. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much for all of your answers. There's one last question that we'll take before we close. For those one, anyone who intervenes, I will be straight, we need one-minute response, because we're coming closer to our – the end of our time.

The question is: After Africa's partners host big summit and delegations, many African publics see the resulting commitments as lofty promises. Besides actually following through on commitment, how can Africa's partners gain some trust from African publics? So I think on this one we'll start with DAS Scott, and then Ambassador Yonetani. And then if we have time we'll come to our African representatives, because I think it's primarily geared towards the international – the quote/unquote, "international community," donor countries. Thank you.

Mr. Scott: Yeah, no, thank you. I think – and thank you for the reference also to the African Leaders Summit. So we look forward to working with the African Union here in Washington as well. And your ambassadors, Madam Ambassador, to make sure that we have a very productive summit later this year. But the question is a very good one. So a summit occurs, and then what happens? And how do we evaluate it, and how do we keep track of what we're supposed to be doing?

I think what we've seen with the democracy summit, and we'll see this, I think, becoming more and more a part of summitry, certainly our intention,

is that we follow up. We set ourselves goals, and then we follow up later. And we have a specific timeframe in which we do that. So for the democracy summit, for instance, the first phase took place virtually. There'll be a second summit in which those that made commitments will be rolling out what they've done in order to meet their commitments. And so I think that that is a – is an important way in which we can signal that it's not just one meeting and nothing follows on.

So it's a very good question. And I think for us the answer is in ensuring that we have follow on, you know, measuring and evaluation, like we do on specific projects that we run. It's very important, in order to let people know that it's not just a one-off meeting. So that's a good question. And we're doing what we can to ensure that it's not going to be a one-off meeting. Thank you.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you, DAS Scott. Ambassador Yonetani.

Mr. Yonetani: Yes. Thank you. No, with regard to the TICAD process, since TICAD 3 and 4 in 2003 and '8, and on, we have been developing a very complex – a concrete mechanism to make the follow up of what we have shared, and then – and to make the follow-up mechanism, and evaluating share with our partners. And then I can say that we are doing that monitoring jointly, not only between Japan and African partners, but also with the other international partners, including the U.N., World Bank, and, of course, AUC, and civil society also.

So if I gave the example of the last, TICAD 7, held in Yokohama in 2019, we have established a Yokohama plan of action with the various action items under the major three areas – economy, human security, peace, and stability. And we are now currently in the process of evaluating what has happened regarding these action items. And we are doing it jointly, and the results will be shared in approach to the TICAD 8. Of course, there are some items that we couldn't meet the target, like mobilizing private investment, because of the fluctuations and the impacts created by the pandemic. But we have to recognize the results and take some actions on the basis of that. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Dizolele: Thank you very much. In the interests of time, we will only take one answer from – if you indulge me, Ambassador Suka-Mafudze, I will turn to Cabinet Secretary Omamo to react to that, thirty seconds. We're coming to the close of our session. Please, Cabinet Secretary.

Sec. Omamo: Thank you. Very quickly, I think what Africans want to see are tangible results. They want to see something on the ground. You build trust when people see that the summits produce something that is beneficial to ordinary Africans. And therefore we must find ways in which these loft summits can translate to fundamental change for ordinary people, and so that ordinary

people begin to own the programs, the aspirations, and the vision of these summits. That would be my response.

Mr. Dizolele:

Well, I would like at this moment to thank again the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for making this event possible. Special thanks to our distinguished panelists – Ambassador Koji Yonetani of Japan, Ambassador DAS Robert Scott, Cabinet Secretary Raychelle Omamo, and Ambassador Suka-Mafudze. And obviously great thanks to our audience today for participating. This concludes our session today. Thank you very much.