

Thank you, Professor Berkouk, for that warm welcome and for the opportunity to address your students. I'm deeply honored to be here at the Ecole Superieure des Sciences Politiques and very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss U.S. policy in Africa. I'd also like to congratulate you on the launch of your African studies program.

It's been six months since President Obama met with more than 50 presidents and prime ministers from throughout the continent for the first-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. That Summit established a new model for partnership between the United States and Africa – a partnership of equals that focuses on African capacity to solve problems and on Africa's capacity to grow. Today, I'd like to reflect back on the Summit, evaluate where we are now six months later, and look at what this means specifically for Algeria and its partner, the United States.

As President Obama said, the Summit reflected the reality that even as Africa continues to face great challenges, we're also seeing the emergence of a new, more prosperous Africa – prosperity that is created and led by Africans.

Africa has some of the **fastest-growing economies in the world**, a growing middle class, expanding sectors like manufacturing and retail and a record level of foreign investment. It is a continent with young people that are full of dreams and ambition.

The U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit helped make the point that Africa's growth depends, first and foremost, **on continued reforms in Africa, by Africans**. The leaders pledged to step up efforts to pursue reforms that attract investment, reduce barriers that stifle trade – especially between African countries –and to promote regional integration.

The Summit also made clear that **Africa's prosperity depends on Africa's greatest resource -- its people**. During the Summit, President Obama and the African leaders focused on three broad areas where the U.S. and Africa can make progress together.

First, they discussed opportunities to expand trade that creates jobs. President Obama announced \$33 billion in new trade and investment from U.S. companies that will spur African development and support tens of thousands of jobs. President Obama and the African leaders also discussed what we can do, as governments, to accelerate that kind of investment – economic and regulatory reforms, regional integration, and development so that growth is broad-based, especially among women.

Second, they discussed opportunities to strengthen the governance upon which economic growth and free societies depend, including rule of law, open government, accountable and transparent institutions, strong civil societies, and respect for the universal human rights of all people.

Third, they also discussed opportunities to deepen our security cooperation against common threats. As President Obama said at the Summit, African security forces and African peacekeepers are in the lead across the continent, and the United States is proud to support their efforts. At the Summit, the U.S. focused on ways that we can continue to strengthen Africa's capacity to meet transnational threats and, in doing so, make all of our nations more secure.

So, what can we report as progress in the six months since the Summit?

First, let me be clear that the greatest challenge we face in Africa – as in every region of the world, including the United States – is balancing the near-term and urgent imperatives with our long-term priorities. Situations like the Ebola outbreak, the crisis in Mali, and the scourge of terrorism – including the horrific acts perpetrated by Boko Haram -- demand an urgent response. We have been able to meet these urgent imperatives precisely because we have tackled them in the same spirit of partnership that marked the U.S. –Africa Summit. In this increasingly interdependent age, no nation can go it alone.

To quickly touch on some of the near-term, urgent priorities that the U.S. and Africa have tackled since the Summit:

One of the most pressing issues in Africa has been the Ebola outbreak, a truly global challenge that demands a global response. Thanks to a concerted effort by the international community, including heroic work by local health care workers in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the rates of new Ebola cases are at their lowest level since June 2014 – which hopefully marks a turning point in the epidemic.

The U.S. has been involved in the response since the Ebola outbreak began. As President Obama said, the Ebola epidemic and resulting humanitarian crisis in West Africa is a top national security priority for the United States. 2,800 officials from multiple U.S. Government agencies have been involved in our efforts to combat this disease and mitigate its effects. To date, the United States has provided \$951 million in humanitarian assistance, including food aid.

In practical terms, this means that 100 specialists from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and U.S. Agency for International Development are on the ground in West Africa, working in partnership with host country officials. U.S. experts have been working in host nations' Emergency Operations Center and also training local health to trace contacts and set up isolation wards, measures that have been critical to stopping the spread of Ebola. The Department of Defense's Africa Command has provided the human resources, airlift and logistics support to set up 17 treatment units, a regional logistics hub, and training programs; in sum, up to \$1 billion to bolster the U.S. Government's response to the outbreak.

It is important to remember that the crisis in the region will not end when the virus is stopped. We must continue to stand at West Africa's side in the months and years to come, helping the region to recover from the devastating social, economic and psychological impacts of the outbreak. And by "we," I mean the entire international community. The Ebola virus is not a regional problem; it is a global problem and it requires a global solution.

The crisis in Mali also is a pressing issue, with implications for security and prosperity throughout the Sahel and North Africa. The U.S. Government is grateful to the Algerian government for the leadership role it has taken in promoting a peaceful resolution, through hosting and facilitating the ongoing inter-Malian dialogue, and welcomes the cease fire agreement signed on February 19. The U.S. has actively supported the peace talks, engaging both the government and the armed groups at every juncture. In addition to acting as an impartial observer, we have facilitated the translation and mass distribution of information and documents related to the talks, to raise public awareness of and support for the peace

process. We also have supported independent and professional news coverage of the talks, helped sustain the positive call for peace and national unity through the “Ensemble Nous Sommes Un Peuple” campaign, and provided assistance to the Malian Ministry of National Reconciliation with training and resources to promote public communications on the peace process.

The horrors perpetrated by Boko Haram continue to threaten Nigeria and its neighbors. As Secretary Kerry reiterated February 6, “We condemn the horrific and barbaric actions of these groups that continue to show total disregard for the sanctity of human life” and we extend our deepest condolences to the thousands of families that have been impacted by this despicable violence. The United States is committed to supporting Nigeria and its neighbors as they address the violence caused by Boko Haram. At the same time, we stress that Nigeria must take a comprehensive approach to fighting violent extremism that brings both civilian and security tools to the fight, protects civilians, and respects human rights.

In addition to our bilateral security cooperation with Nigeria, the United States stands ready to provide support to regional efforts to combat Boko Haram, including the Lake Chad Basin’s AU-endorsed Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). We continue to work with Nigerians, including within the federal government, as well as state officials, religious leaders, civil society and business communities in the north to support efforts to prevent and combat violent extremism. We commend efforts by the African Union and Lake Chad Basin Commission to bring together the MNJTF and we will continue to work with our regional and international partners to make it an effective force.

Crises in both Sudan and South Sudan – continue to require international attention.

Today the promise of a vibrant South Sudan lies deferred as a result of senseless man-made crisis. More than 53 percent of South Sudanese need humanitarian assistance, and violence has forced more than 2 million people from their homes since December 2013, including more than 1.5 million IDPs. The United States has provided nearly \$1 billion in emergency funding to address the acute needs of the people of South Sudan since the start of this crisis, but we know aid alone will not solve this conflict. The U.S. government continues to press both the Government of South Sudan and the opposition to engage meaningfully in the peace negotiations.

As much as the conflict in South Sudan has demanded our collective attention, we have consistently prioritized Darfur conflict and the wider conflict in Sudan. We remain conscious of the continuing governance concerns expressed by the people of Sudan, particularly in the country’s peripheries. The U.S. has said repeatedly that there is no military solution to Sudan’s conflicts. We believe that the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP)’s “one process, two tracks” mediation presents the best opportunity to secure synchronized Cessations of Hostilities (CoH) agreements in Darfur and the Two Areas. This would open the way to a fuller discussion of the root causes of Sudan’s conflicts, of political and economic reform, and of national identity through an inclusive and comprehensive National Dialogue.

Nigeria's upcoming elections – previously scheduled for February 14 – are critical for Africa, and for the world. The United States has long supported Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in preparing for elections that are both credible and peaceful, to ensure the results reflect the will of the Nigerian people. Secretary Kerry secured pledges to condemn electoral violence from both of the leading candidates when he visited Lagos in January. Upon the announcement February 8 of a six-week postponement, the Secretary expressed our deep disappointment over the delay and the political interference behind it and reiterated calls for "a free, transparent, and credible electoral process in Nigeria." He asked all candidates, their supporters, and Nigerian citizens to maintain calm and reject election-related violence."

In the midst of all of these urgent priorities, the U.S. Government has remained focused on the long-term objectives discussed at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, including the many opportunities in this dynamic, innovative and resilient region.

On the economic and trade front, in addition to the \$33 billion in new trade and investment by U.S. companies that was announced at the Summit, the U.S. Department of Commerce is moving ahead with the Doing Business in Africa campaign, which is designed to connect American businesses with African partners; support American investment in Africa; and expand access to financing options for American businesses that want to export to Africa.

Underpinning this business development and growth must be expanded access to electricity. That's why, at the U.S.-Africa Summit, President Obama tripled the United States' Power Africa goal to create 30,000 megawatts of clean energy and to power at least 60 million household and business connections in Africa. We've made significant progress in the six months since the Summit: Transactions expected to generate 4,102 megawatts have closed, while transactions expected to generate an additional 15,000 megawatts are in the planning stages. More than 90 private sector partners have committed more than \$20 billion in support of the Power Africa initiative, and we have forged strategic partnerships with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Swedish Government, generating another \$9 billion in support for this vitally important project.

And while the Power Africa initiative is geared toward sub-Saharan Africa, it's important to note that the U.S. Government has been equally active in promoting access to electricity in North Africa, through \$500,000 in U.S. Trade and Development Agency support for training for the GE/Sonelgaz megadeal in Algeria which will add eight gigawatts (GW) to Algeria's electrical grid. And this project, once completed, will give Algeria the capacity not just to be totally self-sufficient in its own power-generation needs but also to be an exporter of much-needed equipment and technology to the rest of Africa.

On the governance front, the U.S. and African leaders agreed to form a new partnership to combat illicit finance, stepping up efforts to fight against the corruption that costs African economies tens of billions of dollars every year. The partnership is an opportunity for the U.S. and its African partners to establish a working group, comprised of the U.S. and willing African governments, the African Development Bank, the AU, UN-ECA and others, that would develop and report back to the Leaders a recommended action plan to combat corruption and other forms of illicit finance. The President of Senegal has agreed to

partner with the U.S. in launching this initiative and we are exploring next steps with the Senegalese government.

Support for democratic processes and institutions is a key part of the United States' efforts to work with our African partners to strengthen governance throughout the continent. It is my country's fundamental belief that, when sustained by a deep commitment to the rule of law and respect for civil society, strong democratic institutions generate greater prosperity and stability.

Countries with strong and accountable democratic institutions and participatory processes meet with greater success in mitigating conflict and ensuring security. We work to advance democracy by strengthening institutions at every level, supporting and building upon the aspirations of Africans for more open and accountable governance, promoting human rights and the rule of law, and challenging leaders whose actions threaten the credibility of democratic processes. Empowerment of women and girls is a critical part of good governance, prosperity and stability, and we support the great strides and commitments made by many African countries and the African Union to increase gender security.

More than two dozen African nations will hold elections in 2015 and 2016. The United States supports peaceful, democratic transitions of power and free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections that allow every citizen an opportunity to cast his or her vote. We will work with governments, civil society, regional organizations, and the African Union to help ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to make their voices heard throughout the electoral process and at the ballot box.

Finally, on the security front, President Obama and the African leaders discussed opportunities to deepen our security cooperation. Professional, capable military and police forces that respect human rights and civilian control are critically important to safeguarding the democratic institutions that have emerged in so many African countries. These forces also are needed to address transnational security threats, including violent extremist organizations and narcotraffickers.

During the Summit, President Obama underlined our commitment to supporting the development of responsible security institutions by announcing the Security Governance Initiative (SGI). The initiative emerged out of consultations with our African partners who said they wanted a more strategic and sustained approach to security sector reform efforts.

The SGI is a multi-year effort that will initially focus on six countries – Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger and Tunisia. It will support the development of sound policies, institutional structures, systems, processes, and effective management so that governments can efficiently and effectively deliver security in a sustainable way. We look forward to expanding SGI to additional partners in the future and believe this effort will complement many other regional security initiatives already underway, such as the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, and help reinforce the capacity of some of Algeria's southern neighbors.

So, what does all of this mean for Algeria and for U.S. –Algeria relations?

I propose that we answer this by looking again at partnership, the basis for the U.S.-Africa Summit and for the United States' relationship with Algeria.

Algeria is an important partner for the United States. It is a strategically important country with enormous capacity and a vital leadership role on the continent. Algeria and the United States share many of the same perspectives and concerns regarding developments in Africa, and we hope to strengthen our partnership with Algeria to promote peace and prosperity throughout the continent.

Algeria is playing a leading role in the international community's efforts to promote a peaceful solution to the conflicts in Mali and Libya. We deeply appreciate the Algerian government's facilitation of the inter-Malian dialogue and welcome the Algerian government's efforts to support the UN-led talks in Libya. Algeria is also partnering with its neighbors in the Sahel to develop a common understanding of transnational threats and to help its neighbors develop capable security institutions, and plays a leading role in supporting and strengthening African Union institutions.

On the economic front, Algeria is a country with enormous potential. Its strategic location at the crossroads of Africa and Europe makes Algeria well-positioned to be a regional economic leader. American and other foreign companies continue to invest in the hydrocarbon sector, in healthcare, infrastructure, transportation and others. I am proud of the partnerships American firms have built with Algeria, and I am confident the economic relationship will continue to grow and prosper.

Algeria is at a critical moment in its economic development. It is evolving from a country rich in oil resources to one that recognizes the importance of moving away from dependence on fossil fuels. The Algerian government recognizes that to become a more prosperous nation, it must evolve towards a more diversified and sustainable economy.

The signs are promising, and the potential for economic growth is enormous. President Bouteflika and his government have committed to building the country's infrastructure, and to bringing reforms that can spur job creation for Algerians and expand Algeria's trade and investment.

International financial institutions, foreign investors, the Algerian business community, and my Embassy want to engage the Algerian government on ways to improve the business environment and attract more investment to Algeria. The Algerian Government's "Doing Business" project is an important step forward, and the United States Government stands ready to assist in any way possible.

The World Trade Organization provides another venue for partnership that, in the long term, will promote economic growth. WTO accession will not only create greater trade between Algeria and other countries, it will send a strong signal to investors that Algeria is committed to a rules-based trading system as well as a diversified economy. This certainty will encourage businesses to invest and support projects that will create employment opportunities for young Algerians. A growing Algerian economy will have ripple effects throughout the region, spurring economic development in other African countries as well.

Algeria is, in many ways, exactly what President Obama had in mind when he discussed the potential of a new Africa – one with a young, growing population that is full of dreams and ambition, and an enormous capacity.

Like the other countries in Africa, the United States seeks to partner with Algeria for democracy, peace and prosperity.

We want African leaders and African citizens – including here in Algeria – to know that the United States is committed to an enduring, multi-faceted partnership that promotes inclusive economic growth, security, health and democratic development. This partnership is not about overnight solutions or one-off deals, but instead about long-term collaborative efforts.

And you – the young, smart, talented students of Algeria – are a key part of this partnership. As President Obama said at the U.S. Africa Summit, “Africa’s prosperity depends on Africa’s greatest resource – its people.”

And on that note, I’d be very happy to take your questions.