



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE AFRICAN UNION

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
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Students of Hazelwood West High School:

It is a joy to greet you as you celebrate African American History Month. Thank you for asking that I share with you a brief statement about the significant work being done by the United States Mission to the African Union in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, the diplomatic capital of the African Continent.

The U.S. Mission to the African Union (USAU) is where I serve and as such I am accredited to the African Union and have the responsibility of representing the U.S. at the African Union, a multilateral organization comprised of 53 African Nations. As a distinct mission dedicated to a multilateral institution, USAU is analogous to other multilateral missions such as the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN) and the U.S. Mission to the European Union (USEU).

In full recognition of Africa's importance to the U.S. and the African Union's role as the major player in continent-wide issues, the U.S. government established a separate mission to the AU in 2006 to observe and engage the African Union exclusively. The U.S. holds the distinction of being the first non-African country with a dedicated ambassador to the AU.

President Obama, recognizing the importance of Africa, stated in his historic speech in Ghana, "I do not see the countries and the peoples of Africa as a world apart; I see Africa as a fundamental part of our interconnected world- as partners with America on behalf of the future we want for all of our children." He goes on to say that partnership must be grounded in mutual responsibility and mutual respect.

As U.S. Ambassador to the African Union my role is to represent the President and the interest of the U.S. in relations with the African Union. Africa is a continent of great diversity with many peoples, languages, traditions, religions, cultures, economies and systems of thought. This diversity is both an opportunity and a challenge. The key to working successfully in a diverse society is to recognize that there are common bonds and common interests that, when addressed in a spirit of cooperation and respect for the good of the whole, benefit the common good. A prosperous and peaceful Africa and an Africa where good governance is the norm benefits all Africans and all peoples of the world.

At The African Union, the U.S. focuses on the need to strengthen the capacity of Africa to take control of its destiny. For this reason there is a heightened respect for the need for investment in Africa and partnership with Africa. Investment *in* Africa and partnership *with* Africa is strategically and philosophically different from simply giving aid to Africa. Investment and

partnership create long term improvement and empowerment while simply giving aid can create dependency and delay Africa's self sufficiency.

The world cannot and must not determine Africa's future; however, the world community can and must partner with Africa and it's democratically and constitutionally elected leaders to work together toward an Africa envisioned by the African Union as; integrated, prosperous and peaceful; an Africa driven by its own citizens, a dynamic force in the global arena. Our focus recognizes the statement by President Obama that Africa's future is up to Africans. Recognizing the richness of Africa's promise, the United States and the world stand ready to partner with Africa in the development of its future.

Africa is filled with resources, blessed with abundant land and a resourceful and talented people. The problems that face Africa are the same problems that face the global community: climate change, food security, health and well being, economic integration, good governance, democracy, electoral assistance, education, and peace and security.

President Obama has articulated five priorities in the U.S. Government's interaction with Africa. These priorities are remarkably consistent with the direction of the African Union's strategic objectives. The U.S. top priorities are:

1. Supporting strong and stable democracies and good governance
2. Fostering sustained economic growth and development
3. Strengthening public health
4. Preventing, mitigating and resolving armed conflict and
5. Helping to address transnational challenges.

Thank you for your interest in the work we do at USAU.

I strongly encourage you to become active in the Model United Nations Program or any other international affairs program offer by Hazelwood West High School. As a member of the Soldan High School Model United Nations in the late 60s', I could not imagine that I would someday actualize the skills gained in my high school activity dealing with international affairs.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Battle
Ambassador