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Africa in 2017

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PITA: Hello and welcome to Intersections, part of the Brookings Podcast, the podcast where we discuss different angles on policy issues. I'm your host, Adrianna Pita, and with me today are Amadou Sy, who's a senior fellow and director of our Africa Growth Initiative, and Witney Schneidman, who is a non-resident fellow with the recognition and senior international advisor for Africa at Covington & Burling. Thank you very much for being with us today. So, the occasion that brought us all together is that this week the Africa Growth Initiative has put out their annual Foresight Africa report that tends to pick out, I think it's usually five and seven priorities for the continent for the coming year. It sort of looks at how these different priorities and concerns intersect and making some recommendations for policymakers both in Africa and occasionally back in the US and other developing nations.

This year, there were some trends about economic diversification, financing for development, about job creation, because this big upcoming youth boom is going to need to be employed, benefits of technology, urban planning, climate change, and of course issues of good governance.

We're gonna get into some specifics of those issues as we go on, but gentlemen, I wanted to start, if each of you could weigh in on maybe one or two of the most positive and maybe the most negative trends happening in different parts of the continent and what countries maybe you think are showing the most promise or the ones that everyone should be keeping the biggest eye on as possible trouble spots.

SY: Ok, maybe I can start. So thanks for the opportunity to discuss the foresight for 2017. So, basically one way to look at the economic record and for sub-Saharan African countries is to think of it as a really I must say a multispeed growth story, it's a

mixed story. So on one hand, you have basically the oil importers who are benefiting from the low price of oil in a growing very, very fast. If you look at the top ten list of countries that are growing the most in Africa, you have all of them growing more than five percent in nominal GDP terms. We have of course Cote d'Ivoire at eight percent, of Ethiopia at seven point five percent, Ghana who successfully had a democratic transition at seven point four percent, Tanzania, Senegal, and so on. And then on the other side, you have the oil exporters; and it is important because oil exporters account for about half of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. And there we really, really have a serious problem and we need prompt and decisive action, and my senses that countries are treating the shock a little bit too much as a temporary shock and muddling through this shock will not just be the right solution.

SCHNEIDMAN: Right, and just to follow up on that, I mean Africa last year, sub-Saharan Africa had its lowest period of growth in the past 20 years last year, but if you take out Nigeria, Angola, and South Africa, it's not too bad. It's about 4 and a half percent, so I think therein lies the key challenge for 2017, how to get more growth in those key economies. And Nigeria's been in recession, I think they're projected about one percent growth this year, but there's a really deep challenge and that is how to really accelerate growth in the nonoil sectors: how can you get agriculture, how can you get manufacturing going, how can you get more cross border trade going? And in very positive ways, and I think those are key issues that are going to be on the table for 2017.

PITA: Amadou, you had a great quote about these oil producing countries and how to get them to diversify. "Unlike more diversified economies, oil dependent economies are like oil tankers," in that they're really difficult to turn around quickly. What are some of the options are out there for some of these countries and are there things that either their neighbors or organizations like ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) or the African Union can be doing to help them make some of those changes?

SY: So basically, I think that all exporting countries need a three pronged approach. The first thing is, is you need a pain medicine, because the price of oil started falling in 2014 and by 2016 was below its 10-year low, and these countries that depend a lot on oil for their government revenues. I think the figure for Nigeria's about 75% of government revenue comes from oil, so you have this huge drop in your physical revenues and you have also a huge drop in the value of your exports, so basically you have current account deficit and the budget deficit, and you have to finance that. So, you have short-term macroeconomic policies that you have to implement quickly, and in the case of Nigeria, I think it really took some time to really let the exchange rate absorb some of the shock, and even now you still have many, it's even more than two exchange rates, so they haven't really used exchange rate as a shock absorber.

You need also to work on financing your deficit and unfortunately reserves are down, so you depend a lot on external financing, and the issue is that this comes at the wrong time, at a difficult time, I would say, because US interest rates are increasing this will also have for foreign investors, they maybe have less appetite for risky investments and so on.

So it will be a bit difficult to get external financing so that's the short term macroeconomic adjustment, but that's like a pain medicine you need also to work on the future on medium term broad-based growth and that's where as Witney said, you need to diversify your economies away from oil you need to kick start agriculture and have agro-processing and so on. See, how to increase productivity in the services sector. And the third approach is you need to use this opportunity also as the saying goes "never let a good crisis go to waste," and you need to revisit the social contract when the price of oil was high, you had winners and you had losers, now the price of oil is down you really have to be careful about who is going to be affected the most. You need to protect the vulnerable segments of the society and you need to also be serious about having an economy which is less dependent on oil, which has a private sector, which is not the only one the only thing they do is depend on oil. The government depends on oil, then the whole economy depends on oil. You have to really get this social contract going on.

SCHNEIDMAN: You know, just to pick up on that, like looking forward to 2017. I think one of the most interesting developments I'm going to refer to is the election in Ghana, and the new president Nana Akufo-Addo. Part of his campaign was to promise one factory per district, you know, and that's, that's really interesting. One, it's a bold promise. Can he deliver? But it shows the priority on productivity and industrialization and manufacturing and that is the right priority, so I think it's really, you know, incumbent on all stakeholders to make sure that he's successful in that respect and getting those factories up and going getting those jobs created and not just the jobs, it's the supply chain. Because you produce something and you distribute it around the country, you

want to export it to the region, you want to export it globally and that's really the next phase of Africa's integration into the global economy and we're seeing that happen around the continent, like in Ethiopia, we're starting to see some investors investing in the growth of cotton to grow cotton and transfer that into the production of fabric and then transfer that into production of apparel and export it to the US. And when we get these global supply chains in place, that will really be quite important to the whole job creation story on the continent.

ANON: If I may, also, I would just add to that the importance of regional value chains and regional integration I mean the Eastern African community I think more than 150 million people, ECOWAS, which is even larger with just Nigeria and its neighbors and even within ECOWAS in Nigeria having difficulties but you you see also Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana growing at more than seven percent...Senegal, also at more than six percent. So regional integration has a lot of promises for the continent.

PITA: Are those some of the best examples of countries that are getting it right, of working together, of saying that, ok we're going to build the plant, you guys have the port access and we're going to work together to create this integrated supply chain.

SY: So this is an interesting question, because I come from Senegal which is in ECOWAS, particularly within ECOWAS in the West African monetary union, which is one of the oldest monetary unions on the continent, so when it comes to financial integration it's pretty high. There's one stock exchange, it's true, Ivorian stocks are dominant but you have one stock exchange for eight countries. If you look at the bond market you can buy bonds issued by any of the eight countries and so on you can send money with your mobile phone from Senegal to Cote d'Ivoire and so on.

But when you see a lot of momentum, a lot of action is also in the east African community with Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and to a lesser extent Burundi, and see lots of interesting things happening there in terms of, for example, the time it takes to clear customs and have goods from Mombasa to Kigali and so on.

WITNEY: Right, and that works the other way, and this goes right to the infrastructure challenge which is front and center to the economic development story because you know from a global perspective the cost of productivity is so much lower in places like Rwanda and Uganda, but the price goes up dramatically once that product is finished and it has to go through all these checkpoints to get from Kigali down to the port in Mombasa. So it's really a question of how do we streamline that process? And that's front and center on the regional integration agenda for 2017.

PITA: Ok, that sort of leads to two different parts I want to pursue: I'm going to pursue that infrastructure question, first because Witney, you had written an interesting piece. So you had written about how for U.S. presidents, Africa is usually not first on their mind and their first couple months, it'll take them awhile to get around to coming up with an African policy. But you had made the recommendations that if Trump is serious about pursuing American infrastructure by pursuing interest in African infrastructure, he could also help job and economic issues in the US, and I thought that was really interesting. I want if you could go into that a little bit please.

ANON: Right, so on election night, when Donald Trump's elected president, one of the commitments he made was to build infrastructure in the United States, and I think there's a great translation between that commitment to build infrastructure in the United States, that commitment to create jobs in the United States to building infrastructure to

being part of the buildup of Africa's transportation infrastructure, energy infrastructure, health infrastructure...and I think there's a real opportunity for U.S. companies to get involved in this, because it would imply a number of things: one, an increase of the export of US products to the continent. In 2015, we exported about 18 billion dollars worth of goods and services, that translates into the support of some 120,000 jobs here in the United States, so if we can really ramp that up I think, you know, we can create more jobs in the United States by being more active commercially in Africa. That's number one, and number two, there are a number of initiatives already in play like Power Africa and of the last three administrations, there has been this tradition of bipartisanship. There is a strong bipartisan consensus between Republicans and Democrats on the hill that Africa is a priority for the United States and Africa is a region worth investing in, so I would like to see this Power Africa commitment expand to health to energy to infrastructure so that US companies, which you know still are skittish about investing in Africa become much more deeply involved, and I think it's very possible to do this and this could be a very compelling legacy for the Trump administration that would conform to making America great again but in the process helping African achieve its own greatness.

PITA: Are there any concerns for US companies going in and doing more business in Africa depending on what their presences and what their investments are and, of course, that that is then suppressing African companies or the development of an African country who deals in those issues or the development of local industry in any way?

ANON: Well that's a really important question, because it really depends on how a company invests in Africa, you look at a company like GE, which has done tremendous work in the continent over the last 10 years. Since they opened an office in Nairobi, they've been active in the health sector, they've been active in the energy sector, and transportation sector, they've hired about 4,000 largely Africans across the continent at all levels from most senior to the most junior, and I think this is the right kind of investment, where maybe you're bringing American business know how, maybe you're bringing American technology but you're training and you're hiring locally, and that enables folks to train up leave GE start their own company, compete against GE and that's what we want to see, so I think there's a lot of scope for innovation in the private sector to accelerate the economic development process.

SY: So if I can add-on, first it's also about American small and medium enterprises because you know I think one issue that many Americans don't see is how large the US has an economy, I mean Italy is maybe as large as California, you know, it's just a huge economy and a small and medium enterprise in the U.S. is kind of big in Africa, and there are markets there for them and while they need some handholding, they need some introduction and so on and they can complement, especially in some areas like renewables and so on, they can complement what larger companies are doing in the U.S. implicitly here, which can help these small and medium enterprises get into Africa. But too I think from the African perspective, it is important to think about the win-win cooperation with foreign partners and here what I have in mind is when African countries think about local content regulations to strike the right balance between, you know, transfer of Technology and transfer of skills like Witney alluded to, but also not to

put the pendulum too far, so as to discourage new entrance. So it's really striking the balance there and, for example, I remember the World Bank report, that was pretty interesting and was recommending to look at the whole value chain and see where countries can intervene, maybe when it's in the oil sector, in the downstream sector, you can really ask for more local content but upstream you can phase it in and give companies the time to adjust.

PITA: So I want to move on to the technology aspect in terms of whether its economic diversification. A lot of the technology aspect has to do with the rise of mobile technology, access to mobile money. Kenya's M-pesa program is sort of the big stand out that most people site, and using mobile technologies for people, to allow ordinary people have access to lines of credit to create a savings accounts and not meeting have a brick-and-mortar bank.

I was wondering if you can talk a little bit about who else besides Kenya is really making some good strides in this and sort of where the next steps in the role that technology plays and what those aspects are.

ANON: Yes, so one interesting thing also about mobile money, it has implications for gender violence in the sense that the recent research, just to show that women are benefiting a lot from mobile money, women entrepreneurs and so on in Kenya and silence so I think about two things—The first thing is that Africa really is leading when it comes to the use of mobile payments, mobile technology, and so on, but the next step now is to go to internet usage right? We're not there yet and this really requires investment in infrastructure, fiber optics, and so on. Even in education, how do people use the internet in Africa for what, will it increase productivity, it's a broader question. I

mean even in the US with the fall of productivity, everybody's asking questions about how this new technology is really making productivity higher or not. So this is a very interesting question, but the second question is also to move beyond mobile payments and to think about the digital economy, think about digital jobs--There we have some questions. Its true Africa needs to be industrialized and so on, but I always have discussions in the back of my mind, what will be the jobs of the future if the plans of the future will be all using digital technology, and so on.

Maybe Africa should also start training a workforce which is sufficiently qualified to work in this new technology, and we have to think about digital. When it comes to the government procurement and service delivery, we have to think digital up in health. I think the same questions that richer countries are having when it comes to the role of digital in their economy, I think African countries should also be engaged in that conversation and see...I don't like the word leapfrog but maybe to see how we can use digital to solve the challenges that we have at home.

WITNEY: So let me just build on this because this is a really important subject, so you know, I look at it too. And if you look at Nollywood, Nigeria's film industry, to me that sort of is another vital dimension of this conversation. Nollywood, as it's known as the third largest content creator in the world after Hollywood and Bollywood, so the Nigerian film industry employs about a million people, which is the largest sector after agriculture, but what's the business model there? Of producing content-- it's largely a producer, writer, director—They get a couple hundred thousand dollars together to make the film, pretty simple, in six to eight weeks, tell very compelling story, transfer it onto DVD... but for every one DVD sold, nine are copied so what's happening, is a lot of

value a lot of intellectual property is not going back to the creators, it's not going back to the writers, it's not going back to the actors, not going back to the technicians, so how do you capture that? And the former finance minister of Nigeria, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, you know, she said that intellectual property is one of the tools of economic development and have to be part of the economic development toolkit, and this goes right to digital, you know, because I think that's the way a lot of this value is going to be captured...Nigeria's not going to have cinemas popping up all over the place. That generation, that level, is going to be skipped, but initiatives like iRoko, businesses like iRoko tv and Netflix going into Africa, using the internet, using digital to start subscriber services. It not only captures value, but this really speaks to this broad diaspora because it's Nollywood that's telling Africa's story and hundreds of millions of people in Africa in the Diaspora are watching this content, and if it can be, you know monetized, to a greater value I think just more people in the Diaspora and outside would benefit from it as well.

SY: Yeah, coming back to your question, in Foresight Africa, we have a map showing the tech hubs, the number of tech hubs in Africa and one interesting finding is that you have more tech hubs that have been created by civil society than tech hubs that are sponsored by the government, which I think could be a good thing. But on the one hand, because we cannot escape the government in Africa, but we need a government that makes the right choice, but it's important not to stunt this dynamism that we can see. We are the youngest population, and will be the youngest continent for a while as the rest of the world is aging, so there's a lot of energy there, which needs to be nurtured and pushed and that could be something really positive for the continent.

PITA: One of the other technological sort of leapfrog points that I thought was pretty interesting, it's about use of solar technology, both in providing electricity but also being used to help power mobile connections. The Guardian has this really nice photo essay of Vodacom had put up a mobile mast in this remote village in DRC, and it was being powered by solar power and so they've gone back to see what sort of changes that had, and I guess there's a growing use of micro grids, micro electric grids that are powered by solar energy. And if you help the small villages where no electric company is going to run the wires all the way out there to be able to keep them maintained, but these small grids are providing some benefits. Can you talk a little bit about this solar energy?

SY: And you know, I think this is also an opportunity for the continent to avoid the development path, for example that we've seen in China. If Africa development can develop in a green way, it can use renewable energy much more than other places, including solar, and I think with the development into technology, everybody's waiting for this technology you know solar and other types of energy. I think that connects very positive, also in terms of the payment, there are ways to use solar with some kind of payment platforms where you only pay for small amounts and so on, which is also needed. The other thing though is that we need also to think about the use of solar not just for you know recharging your mobile phone and having one lightbulb, but also for small industries and many industries and so on. I think if we can have also a bit more scale that will be also useful.

PITA: I want to move on from the technology aspect to sort of go on governance. Governance, every year, that's always one of the big priority areas; you mentioned

Ghana having had a very successful and peaceful transition in the recent elections, what are some other countries who have big elections coming up in 2017 and beyond the national government level, what are some other major civil society governance issues that we should be looking for in the next year?

WITNEY: Well Angola and Kenya are two governments that are having elections coming up but you know these transitions are constant. Gambia is a case in point, where they had an election last year, but the president isn't going to step down this year after 20 years. Now ECOWAS wants to come in, they're threatening to remove them, so you know through force...how's that gonna work out? You know Angola's president, dos Santos, is one of the longest serving presidents. He said he's going to step down. Kenya's done very well but they've had violence in elections, they've also had very peaceful elections. I think the point is, as you suggest, you know, African governments, African private sector, African civil society and stakeholders, friends with the continent really have to work together to ensure that peaceful transitions take place and that institutions are getting stronger and that accountability happens in the elections and that they do reflect the will of the people in the countries in which the elections are held.

I mean, we saw a really important election last year in South Africa where the opposition is growing, cutting into the ANC majority. Zambia had sort of not quite as successful elections, so it's still a learning process, it's still that these institutions are still gaining strength. It's hard to generalize across the continent--Nigeria had an extraordinary election the year before last, but I think if you look at the broad, you know, over 20 years, the government's picture has improved dramatically and that is a key to the growth and the opportunity that exists today.

SY: I agree with Witney, especially when he say that it's hard to generalize. I think when it comes to governance in Africa, one needs a country-by-country and even sometimes state by state lens, and really see what is happening and what's the impact on the economy and society and so on. So, for example, Cote d'Ivoire, our fastest growing country, eight percent and recently we had a mutiny in the army which was short-lived, but it's a reminder that as countries are growing, the dividends of peace need to be shared and that democracy is not a linear and simple issue but it's a lot of work, lots of effort.

One really interesting issue that I think deserves more attention is the fact that because African countries need to transform is to have structural transformation, and so on there will be winners and losers right and every time there's change, there's winners and losers too, I think we need more thinking on you know what do we do with that, how do we avoid rent seeking activities to completely, you know again, stunt the transformation... how do we engage civil society, women, everybody? And that's why I was talking about the social contract and going back to the oil exporting countries. Now that the oil revenues are down, really need all the stakeholders to be engaged and have let's say a better equilibrium.

WITNEY: Yes, so on this point, this is really quite important, the whole notion of equality and inequality and sharing the dividend, and so I am absolutely a believer in the Africa rising narrative, I think we have to be very careful how we use it because the Africa rising narrative is not a uniform, it does not speak to the reality of what's happening across 54 countries, because some countries are doing much better than others some sectors are doing much better than other sectors in countries that by and

large are doing well and its really how does government adopt the kind of policies that really not only focus on the economic development equation, but are targeted at reducing the inequality of beneficiaries and those who don't benefit. for instance, you look at the services sector across the continent growing ten, twelve, fifteen percent. Look at the agriculture sector growing one, two percent. Where are most people working in Africa? in the agriculture sector. So how do we bring that more into the mainstream?

You look at East Africa, you look at Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, growing very strongly, but other parts, eastern DRC, not so much you know conflict and still a lot of poverty. How do you bring them into the broader growth equation? There's no simple answer, but I think it really goes to you know, what's your point of analysis here where do you start the policy dialogue and how do you look to make sure that growth is really wide-ranging and its benefits.

PITA: Inequality really is the key factor, that do you think the country shouldn't just be thinking about their GDP broadly but really focusing on the inequality aspect in order to make it sustainable?

WITNEY: I think if 2016 tells us anything, it's focus on those who aren't benefiting, you know if you want continuity of government, if you want to make sure that your institutions are really benefiting, the broad majority of people start by asking who's losing, who's not benefiting and how do we ensure that they're getting a better deal of the social compact.

SY: And you know Africa is a young population and it's the youth, every year we have hundreds of thousands of young people entering the labor force not finding jobs, so we really need to think about that very carefully as we are getting younger and younger and we need to provide jobs. That's a priority and you know, for example, we have a very nice view point about how sometimes the youth is kind of looking at agriculture with eyes like, okay this is not technology, this is not the Internet. In fact, there's a lot of opportunities still in agriculture. Right, so we need not abandon agriculture, we need to have the youth involved in agriculture and increase the productivity of agriculture and link it to new technology, link it to industries and so on.

WITNEY: And link it between urban and rural areas, because Africa's urbanizing at such a rate, it's an under-urbanized environment, but what you don't want is young folks to just come into the cities forgetting about where they come from, to make sure that there's connectivity there and its technology, its supply chain, its infrastructure.

SY: This is an interesting issue, too, because I found out recently also looking at the literature in some African cities are also growing organically in the sense that there is also growth just coming from the city, itself growing, not from rural people coming. In the cities, they're called mushroom cities, I gather, and so we have these mushroom cities and that's an issue and then also we have the issue of secondary series that should not be abundant right? These secondary cities are growing fast and they're important and we also have the third issue which is a link between the rural and urban areas and that's one thing which I think is important because we can't see the trend there, you can see urbanization, you can see the demographic trend, but we don't have the luxury there. We need to have the policies, the right policies right now, and that's

something we're trying to push we've been hammering this message over and over again but again as everything in Africa it's easier to agree on what to do and more difficult to agree on how to do it.

WITNEY: You know this issue of organization is so central because if you look at the map and it's about 50 cities of a million or more and five cities with 20 million, and if you just look at an urban approach to Africa, the policy dialogue just changes the questions you're asking, you know, it's about garbage pickup, it's about environment, it's about schooling, it's about you know transportation. How do you keep these flows going?

SY: And the financing, in Africa, because the money is with the government, right? In the U.S. I think it's with the consumer or the banks. But in Africa, it's with the government and it's with the central government, so cities have tremendous problems to finance their infrastructure, their services, and so on. I think South Africa is one of the few where you can see cities issuing bonds and so on, but in the rest of the continent it's very difficult and it has some political economy also issues. I mean, strong mayors can be a big problem, you know the former mayor of Jacareí is now the president of Indonesia, the former mayor of I think Buenos Aires, I think is now the President of Argentina, if I am not mistaken and you know as a powerful politician, you look at successful mayors with skeptical eyes.

PITA: On the urbanization issue, what is this Agenda 2063 that the AU had put out? It had to do with the UN's new urban agenda about standards for sustainable Urban Development. Can you tell us some more about that Agenda 2063 and what role is that playing in anything?

SY: So this is a good question, yes give me some time to think about it...but I think there are two initiatives: one, Agenda 2063 is really the African Union's vision for the year, 50 year vision on how the continent should look like, and it addresses a number of issues including urbanization, including regional integration and so on, and their cities is included. But recently also at the global level you had UN Habitat, we just had a big conference and there you also have Africans coming up with some ideas about the future of urbanization, the future of cities, but I think really one key area has to do with the financing, really needing to find a way to finance the growth of the city, the planning and really have it in an integrated way...what do you want the region, the continent, what do you want the countries to look like, and what role cities should play in there.

WITNEY: And this plays at the national level, too. I mean, virtually every African country has a national development strategy and I think it's really important for all stakeholders, particularly companies, when they go to invest, to understand what the objective is in the health sector. And if you're a pharmaceutical company, be fluent in what the goals are so you can match your investment to the goals of the government and help them achieve that, and I think that really lays the groundwork for, sort of, the win-win type of investment that we want to see happen in the continent.

PITA: That did strike me, there had been in the Foresight report, there was a great graph that shows the number of cities that are really the primary drivers of the national economy and so why it's a national priority to care about how your cities are doing and not just that city mayor's priority.

ANON: Yeah but you know I'm going to raise a really interesting point, because you don't see many African presidents coming from Mayor positions, which suggests, you know, what's their prior governing experience? You know, in a number of Western countries if that's the right example to use, people come up the ranks, they might be a local legislator, mayor, congressman, a senator, or governor, and then president...so it's really important to make sure that that leaders are aware of the broad swath of challenges, not just the challenges, but what's the experience in dealing with infrastructure, what's the experience dealing with social services for the urban areas, for the rural areas.

PITA: Lastly, I wanted to get to the priority that is climate change, and I felt bad leaving it for last because it is such a majorly important one. I thought it was pretty interesting in that all of the others really fed directly into it, the issues of economic diversification, so creating climate resistant economies, the issue of governance and how you deal with climate mitigation issues, urbanization, and what dense populations mean. So, I left it last for that reason, because it does all sort of come together. Africa of course will be one of the regions that will be hardest hit by climate change, and they're already getting hit sooner than other regions, can you talk a little about some of the major challenges like agriculture, like refugee issues, water scarcity issues that they're facing?

SY: So you know, we had the Paris meeting last year. The good thing is Africa was the only region that came with a unified position, right? They had to really work hard together and came up with a common position. So first, Africa is the continent that suffers the most from climate change, from the effects of climate change, and at the

same time it is the continent that contributes the least to climate change, right? And there's two issues there: one, it's in adaptation and mitigation. So one issue is that Africa is already having to deal with the effects of climate change, it has to adapt you know in some coastal areas, and I've seen that with my own eyes going to Senegal and some places, and you see water advancing and some houses and so on having to be evacuated.

You can see that if you look at the map of Lake Chad, for example, you see how it really has shrunk drastically over the years, and so you can see the effect of El Nino. So, to adapt to this climate change, Africa needs resources that it doesn't have and, see if it contributes the least to climate change, is asking for some resources. Now more developed countries are more focused on mitigation aspects like "you're going to build a new plant, make sure that is less polluting." Let's sure that maybe you know it has to do with the energy mix use less coal, use more wind, and use more solar energy and so their Africa is going to hopefully industrialized and has the potential to have clean industrialization right? So it's asking the debate to strike a balance between the mitigation and adaptation issues and it's pushing for money it needs to be devoted to adaptation. So now hopefully it will be successful.

WITNEY: Right, now I think I'm going to state that as well and I think you know one of the big questions going forward is what will the Trump Administration be and will they stay in, continue to be a partner to the existing infrastructure or something else?

PITA: Some of the statistics out of the report were that I think was that by 2050, crop yields across the continent can be down by as much as twenty to thirty percent, and there is another graph that you had that showed this enormous flattening effect on

the growth of GDP, and so there's some really serious consequences that are pretty scary, I mean just the map of Lake Chad and I think it's from 1963, the present is terrifying. So that we don't end on a completely down note, what things are you most looking forward to for the continent?

WITNEY: Well for me, Africa is kind of not just of opportunity but innovation, and its really how can you take so much of the innovation that's happening, not only the Nollywood space, but in design and technology and linking creative solutions to existing problems. It is happening across the continent, and I think that that's something that I'm looking forward to being involved in. I'm very interested to see the role of the African Development Bank and how that plays out, I think there's great new leadership there, they have a set of priorities that deal with education and infrastructure and energy power that's quite relevant, you know. Germany is talking about a Marshall Plan for Africa and, of course, China you know what does it have in store of course, and what's the US policy going to be. So these are some of the issues that I'm focused on and hopefully we can be involved in.

SY: So when I look at Africa, I see so many opportunities and so many challenges, but one thing that I find unique, that it's a young continent, and it's the youngest continent, and the youthfulness is so vibrant, and you know some friends of mine tell me that it's not that difficult to learn how to program, for example. And so there are so many opportunities that can be realized with the smart, appropriate investment in the youth, and of course giving them jobs and education and training and so on. So I, I feel old already haha. So I think my Africa is already passé, so I'm looking forward to this new one, the one that will be built by this young population.

PITA: Alright, well I want to encourage our listeners to go to Brookings.edu to read the full Foresight Africa report. They can also, by the time this episode airs, the event that we were holding that is a further discussion on the goals of that report will have already happened, so if people wanna hear more discussion about that they can go download that audio from our events podcast, and otherwise they can just follow Foresight Africa hashtag on twitter to see further conversation. Gentlemen, thank you for being here.

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