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WEBINAR

WHY AFRICA MATTERS TO THE UNITED STATES:

TOP 5 REASONS

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PARTICIPANTS:

ALOYSIUS UCHE ORDU (Moderator)

Senior Fellow and Director, Africa Growth Initiative,
The Brookings Institution

DANIELLE RESNICK

David M. Rubenstein Fellow, Global Economy and Development, The Brookings Institution

WITNEY SCHNEIDMAN

Nonresident Fellow, Africa Growth Initiative
The Brookings Institution

LANDRY SIGNÉ

Senior Fellow, Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings
Professor and Executive Director, Thunderbird School of Global Management, Arizona State
University; Distinguished Fellow, Stanford University

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Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:12:03] Good morning. Can you hear me okay? Right. Thank you very much. All right. On behalf of the Africa Growth Initiative at the Brookings Institution, I'd like to welcome you all this morning for taking the time to join us. We know there are so many things you could be doing during this holiday season, including many events in the nation's capital. But welcome anyway. My name is Aloysius Uche Ordu, I'm the director of the Africa Growth Initiative here at the Brookings Institution. As we look ahead to the new year, clearly there are tremendous uncertainties in the global environment as we all have been reading. The world is still reeling from the devastating impact of the pandemic. Globally, sometimes we forget that people are still dying in Africa and elsewhere. To compound it, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has pushed food, fuel and financial crisis higher than we've ever known it since recent times, and inflation has continued unrelenting.

The Fed, the European Central Bank has basically raised interest rates to levels we've not seen since the Great Recession. With such elevated debt levels and rising interest rates, many countries are facing challenges in settling their international financial obligations. Many of those countries are in Africa, as you know. And of course, climate change. We just came back from COP27, climate change continues to wreak havoc with devastating impacts on the livelihoods of our people. Against all these odds, the African continent continues the forward march. The African continental free trade area, as you all know, is the largest by the number of countries in terms of an integration scheme. And the African payment, the Pan-African payment and settlement system has now started in real time processing of cross-border transactions across the continent, which are all positive news coming out of the continent. And in spite of the devastations of COVID, the continent, sub-Saharan Africa grew by 4.7% last year. And this year the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the IMF projecting that growth on this continent will be about just under 4%, which means there is still the momentum in terms of positive developments on the continent.

It's therefore a very, very opportune moment for stocktaking in terms of U.S. Africa relations, as close observers here in Brookings, we know that more needs to be done by the United States as regards U.S. Africa trade, as regards U.S. investments in Africa, as regards the U.S. lending to Africa and indeed, U.S. aid to Africa. To up its game, the Biden administration recently released its new strategy, which you've all read, I hope. And the summit next week is really a recognition that Africa is central to the foreign policy and economic objectives of the administration. The significance of this summit will be far reaching and could indeed influence something like the extension of the African

Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, which is due to expire in 2025 and the evolution of Prosper Africa, are things that these discussions next week will help us understand better the trend and where next these initiatives will go.

And just before we launch this, I just wanted to mention that earlier this week, the donors, the group of donors, including the United States, met in Morocco for the replenishment of the African Development Fund, which is the ADF that focuses on financing low-income countries on the African continent. Some might say the equivalent of IDA, the International Development Association, or the World Bank. And we had asked specifically recommended in this document that at this particular moment in time, it would be important for the United States to really go big in support of the African Development Fund. And we are delighted to report that the replenishment meetings have just concluded in Morocco, and the U.S. actually upped its game to 600 million, which is a 15% increase over the 15th replenishment of the fund, which is really a remarkable accomplishment. And we're hoping that this momentum could be maintained in terms of the push of U.S. support to Africa.

So on the sidelines of the momentous convening of heads of state, we decided to release this document, 'Why Africa Matters to the U.S.' And see it doesn't answer all the questions that you might want to ask or respond to. We know that there are more questions than answers. For example, what are the specific key areas that the heads of states and the administration would explore next week? And what would success look like at the conclusion of the summit? And of course, why does Africa really genuinely matter to the United States? These are all important questions, which we try to capture as much as that as possible in this document.

But to further elucidate on the issues here, I'm joined, I am delighted to introduce you to our esteemed panel, my colleagues here at the Brookings Institution, starting with AGI's senior fellow Professor Landry Signé. We also have our David M. Rubenstein Fellow, Danielle Resnick. And we have Witney Schneidman, our AGI nonresident fellow here at the Brookings Institution. I would like to call on each of them to make 5 to 7 minutes remarks, and then we will follow that with some moderated questions. And thereafter, we would really like to engage with you, the questions you may want to ask and any you wish to express yourself in the issues being discussed. We do recognize that there are people also online, on the continent and elsewhere, on the continent of Africa and elsewhere, and I would like to also bring them into the conversation. So thank you very, very much for

making the time to come. And we really appreciate your being here. Thank you. Okay. Okay. Danielle, you have five, seven minutes. Yeah.

Danielle Resnick [00:19:32] All right. Well, thank you so much, Aloysius. Thanks to all of you for joining us today and really appreciate you Aloysius hosting this convening for us to really reflect on the summit next week. The summit is only the second that the US government has had with African leaders of state. The first being under Obama in 2014. And that's quite different from some of our European Union partners who've had at least six summits with African leaders since 2008. The agenda, as many of you may know, is quite wide ranging for next week, covering many issues. And I think that's a reflection that it should be kind of an equal partnership, taking into account both interests of the US government as well as those of African heads of state.

One key issue that we talk a lot about in this booklet and that will also be of importance next week, is on agriculture and food security. And this has been a longstanding important area for the US government, and I think it's useful to just provide a little bit of context about what the US government has been doing for quite some time in Africa and actually globally on, on agriculture and nutrition and other areas of food security. As some of you may know, the US government's interventions on food security are largely guided by the global food security strategy. This was supported by the Global Food Security Act, which was passed during the Obama administration with large bipartisan support. And the global food security strategy is a large interagency program, at least 11 federal agencies are involved in it. US aid is one of the leaders of this strategy and its program kind of manifests as the Feed the Future initiative, which provides more than \$1 billion a year to now 20 countries, 16 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. So the Biden administration increased from 20, it was down to 12 under the Trump administration, having originally started as 16 under Obama. So a lot of this money is going particularly for agriculture production, for climate resilience, for nutrition security.

In addition, the US is one of the biggest funders of humanitarian assistance globally, both in terms of food aid and monetarily. And this was kind of underscored again at the G7 summit back in June, where the administration committed to over \$2 billion in humanitarian assistance and U.S. aid committed to another 2 billion in international disaster assistance with a large amount targeted at the Horn of Africa. And so both of these kind of axes of intervention are extremely key, given that this year we've witnessed the third global food price crisis in the last 15 years, and sub-Saharan Africa in particular, is always the worst affected with each of these crises. According to the Food and

Agriculture Organization of the UN, we've seen an increase in food price inflation from, to 24% between 2020 and 2022, particularly for key staples, wheat, maize, palm oil on the continent. And a lot of this reflects high levels of import dependence, food import dependence on the continent, which the IMF is now estimating the cost of both food and fertilizer subsidies from this price inflation is putting a weight of almost \$9 billion on, on balance of payments for governments in the region. So I think food security really has to be a priority next week and looking forward to kind of teasing out some, some recommendations in that regard later on.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:23:14] Great. Thank you. Thank you very much, Danielle. Witney.

Witney Schneidman [00:23:17] Thanks, Aloysius. And good morning, everybody. It's great to be here and glad we're having this very timely conversation. What I would like to do before really focusing on the summit is, is to put this summit in some context of U.S. Africa policy, because, you know, we sort of debate does Africa matter? Does it not matter? Where's this summit fitting? And I think it's important to start in the year 2000 with the passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, because that had some far-reaching implications. One, it introduced a new dynamic into U.S. policy. We're going to use trade as a stimulus for economic development. Prior to that time, it had just been about aid. So aid is a donor recipient relationship. Trade is mutual benefit, mutual gain. And that's when the U.S. started moving in, in a new direction with its partners on the continent. AGOA did something else that's really quite important is that it brought together Republicans and Democrats on the Hill in support of programs in Africa. And it said, yes, the U.S. has interests in Africa worth investing in.

So when AGOA was reauthorized for another ten years in 2015, it passed the Senate by 99 to 1. And so we're at this moment we're at this juncture here and AGOA's about to be renewed, we have a new Republican Congress coming in. But I think it's just important to realize that there is this residual, the strong bipartisan support that we need to really invest in and sustain. So with this bipartisan support in the Bush administration, they passed the Millennium Challenge Act, which created the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which has done tremendous amount of work and really moved into grant-based infrastructure focused, large, large projects. Also, of course, PEPFAR, which today is a \$100 billion program that saved some 20 million lives.

In the Obama administration, two of the programs that were created or three were Power Africa, addressing a very central need, there's still 600 million people on the continent who do not

have access to a reliable source of power. Danielle mentioned Feed the Future. It's important to realize that these, these are in law, this is the law of the land. So these programs are going to keep going. And this is an important dimension of policy. The Obama administration also had another very important program called the Young Africa Leaders Initiative. And today there's been some 5000 of Africa's best and brightest who have come to the United States for six weeks of leadership training. And there's an ecosystem of somewhere 750,000 that that the U.S. is in dialogue. This is a tremendous resource on a continent where the median age is 19 years old.

And then, of course, in the last administration, the Build Act was passed, which created the U.S. Development Finance Corporation, took OPIC, a \$30 billion agency, and made it a \$60 billion agency. Prior to that, we could only do debt financing. Now we can do equity investments. And, of course, Prosper Africa was, was established. What we lost in the last administration, I think we're all aware, is the whole momentum on diplomacy, commercial diplomacy. And that brings us to this summit next week, because this is really the revitalization of the U.S. African relationship from a diplomatic point of view. And from my perspective, I think I'm looking for several, you know, significant initiatives as it relates to digital and our technology companies in addressing the question of how do we leverage technology for accelerated economic development? I think something in the area of food security, I'm hoping to see an initiative there. Obviously, climate is remains quite important. And then the whole, you know, one day is going to be devoted to business, as it should be. You know, every time you talk to an African leader, they say, where are American companies? Well, American companies will be there next, next Wednesday. And hopefully we got a number of commitments.

But I think my last point, what I'm looking for, for this summit is the date for the next summit. So, so, so this is not a one off. You know, we need more continuity in our commercial engagement, in our diplomatic engagement. I think we're starting to see that. Secretary Blinken has been in Africa three times over the last year, and I think that's an indication and Samantha Power and other senior officials have gone to the continent so we can really get that momentum this summit next week lives up to its potential. I think we'll be in a really good place come the end of the year.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:28:40] Right. Thank you. Thank you very much, Witney. I think there's definitely momentum going ahead, going forward. Landry, 5 minutes.

Landry Signé [00:28:49] Hello, everyone. And thank you very much, Mr. Uche, for convening us to discuss this extremely important topic. We are grateful for your leadership and thank you for

coming today so for to engage with us. So difficult to speak after my dear colleagues, my dear, my distinguished colleagues. So let me start with acknowledging one thing. This summit is something that we have engaged extensively to make happen through our engagement with the Senate, Witney, and the House and the US International Trade Commission. We have testified, we have drafted contents of op ed blog post, a report including for the National Intelligence Council, and we have done so this both during the previous administration and the start of this one. So we are incredibly encouraged and happy to see that actions are taken to bring to reality some of the ideas that we are sharing here.

So we really have a unique momentum to advance US Africa relations. And why is this important? By the end of this century, four, about four out of ten people worldwide will be Africans. So shifting first from about 17% these days to about 25% by 2050 to about 38 to 40% by the end of the century. Extremely important to take that into consideration. Between 2015, 2015 and 35, we'll have about 440 million people who will reach the working age in Africa. This is also extremely important, and out of this, about 75% of them will need to be, will probably be self-employed or work in micro-enterprises. And about 20% will have a relatively quality job, but not necessarily the very best, and only 5% will have the most refined jobs. So it is really important to put those in perspective. But acknowledging that fact and thinking about 2050, the combined consumer and business spending will exceed 16 US trillion dollar.

So and I want to share these statistics because it is, and Africa is important intrinsically and we have in the piece that we co-published with the now U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, we were discussing mentioning Wakanda, how African and African-Americans could join forces to really help foster U.S. Africa relations. So those are our key dimensions. Now, having said that and having acknowledged the progress made because I think we often highlight what is not working, so it's also important to highlight what is working and to encourage it. So from an emerging technology perspective, one of the reasons why I'm so excited to work on digital transformation before financial revolution and emerging technology, so it's because of the tricky characteristics of those. One is the velocity, the incredible speed that we see from tech innovation to a broad adoption, especially in the recent year. A few centuries ago it was taking about a century or many decades to generalize that technology. Now, once a technology, especially in the social media era, in a matter of months, in matter of years and sometimes in months, we can see the outcomes. So the velocity, velocity is extremely important. So we can find incredibly fast solution to long lasting problems.

So the second point is the scope. Everything in the U.S. Africa policy could be addressed or accelerated, or the implementation could be accelerated through emerging technology whether you speak about productivity, trade, investment or democracy governance, we have the ability to technological processes, but also innovation, which can really help address many of those challenges. So having said that, how could the U.S. help or perhaps before even mentioning how the U.S. could help, I want to mention what African leaders because it's a partnership, it's not just the U.S. which should be driving the engagement. But on one hand, the U.S. governments, the the African government, I mean, should really develop a comprehensive strategy to leverage the benefits of digital transformation, of emerging technologies, of the fourth industrial revolution. And so those require an engagement at the inter-ministerial sector. So when people think about technology, they think about the sector, but you should shift the approach, and engage a plurality of actors because, as I mentioned, the scope is broad. So on, in terms of what the US can do, different dimensions.

So one key element is to first support African leaders at the continental and national level in the priorities that African will have identified. So that is a key dimension, especially if we speak about a win win partnership. The second one, infrastructure. So I will not expand a lot about the infrastructure because you have the infrastructure master here, Dr. Ordu. So infrastructure because without digital and physical infrastructure is simply impossible to see how you can leverage emerging technologies. And associated already to infrastructure you have energy. How do you industrialize when about 600 million people do not have access to electricity? Are not going to get to the grid. So how do you improve human capital, education outcome, but also dynamize or, let's say, reinvigorate industry? So this is another dimension which is important. Of course, this is just a beginning. I'm used to speak, to engage on how to teach, even for 40 hours for week on a row. So I will pause there and I will be happy to continue during the, the moderated session, or the Q&A session.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:36:23] Thank you. Thank you very much, Landry, and all of you. I would like to pivot now to specific questions based on some of the essays that you'll find in this booklet that my colleagues helped to craft. So Danielle, in your essay, you specifically indicated that enhancing Africa's food security and food system transformation, you know, you wrote that the U.S. is already one of the biggest donors of agricultural products, but that there are opportunities for advancement. Could you elucidate further on that?

Danielle Resnick [00:36:59] Yes, thanks, Aloysius. Yes. And so I've already kind of gave some context about the scale of U.S. commitments already that I think there's at least four, I'd say kind of non, well, somewhat nontraditional areas to push further in that that are elaborated in the booklet. One that probably the least nontraditional recommendation is really targeting agricultural research, development and extension. This is certainly something that's talked about quite a lot with regards to African agriculture for at least 20 years that I've, that I've been working in this area. This has been emphasized all the time. This is because there's reams of research showing that the returns to investing in Ag R&D, including identifying new high yielding seed varieties, finding ways to have kind of mechanized microdosing of fertilizer to make it much more targeted, improving extension services using some digital technologies to improve extension services. This is really high returns to agricultural productivity and to income growth, and yet we consistently see low levels of investment in this by African governments themselves.

So the African Union has the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program or CAADP. In 2003, the Maputo Declaration saw African heads of state committing to spend 10% of their budgets to agriculture. And this was re-emphasized again in the Malabo declaration in 2014. And yet just recently, the African Union lamented that really on average, we're only seeing 5% of budgets going to agriculture. You know, only a handful of countries meet that target that they actually set for themselves. And much of the spending that does exist is going to highly visible investments such as fertilizer or seed subsidy programs, and not into what we call low visibility public goods like agricultural extension services, because it's you know, it's not something you can sell on the campaign trail. The public's not really going to understand what benefit they get from, from ag extension, but they can see getting a bag of fertilizer or getting a bag of seed.

So how do we actually incentivize African governments to see the benefit of investing in ag research and technology? I think some South-South learning, seeing what models have been used out there and how that can be translated. Cote d'Ivoire, for example, has an interesting model where a lot of the commodity associations, the exporters have agreed to have an export tax placed on their commodities as long as that's earmarked and reinvested back into research for, for those commodities. So thinking about how do those models translate, how are they scalable, I think could be, could be quite valuable. I think secondly, going off the farm is important too when thinking about food security. So it's not just about food production, but it's also about food access. And I think about

this, you know, in light of some of Landry's comments about demographic transitions, particularly with rapid urbanization on the continent. Urban food security access is a big issue. Most of the urban poor source their food from informal sources, from, from wet markets, from street vendors, street hawkers. And food safety issues are very problematic from those sources due to underinvestment in drainage waste collection, toilet facilities, water, clean water facilities.

So how can we, you know, not just focus on the ag production, on the farm aspects, but expand to actually food access in the cities. And that has some implications for engaging with nontraditional partners. These summits and CAADP commitments are with heads of state, but increasingly there's a lot more actors at the local level that are really important in this space. Mayors in particular are really key. We're seeing with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pack or the C Forties Initiative, mayors in Africa being key actors on food security issues. And many countries in Africa have decentralized responsibilities for agriculture and health to subnational levels, to district councils, to states, to provinces. So we need to start engaging not just with heads of state, in my view. We need to kind of look at the variety of local actors who really play a key role.

Lastly, turning to humanitarian assistance, I think there's some scope to be a bit more creative in how we engage with our early warning systems. The US has excellent early warning systems, including FEWS Net, and many of those systems though focus a lot on kind of crop production, trade modeling assessments, and I think there'd be a lot of value to combining those assessments with the type of future scenarios or political risk assessments that we see the intelligence community engage with. Because increasingly a lot of these food insecurity incidences are the output of compounding crises. There's not just one thing, it's not just about climate. It's not just about, you know, China has an export ban and that affects African access to particular commodity, it's also about conflict or even political instability.

So if we can kind of have a more holistic approach to projecting, you know, not just kind of crop agricultural production issues, but how is ECOWAS putting sanctions on Mali? How is that going to affect food security in Senegal, which has a large level of livestock trade with Mali, for instance? So those are kind of, I guess, four areas that I would look at this. Expanding incentives for investing in ag R&D, looking at food access, particularly at the urban level, engaging with kind of nontraditional partners at the local level and integrating more kind of futures scenarios, risk political risk scenarios.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:43:00] Thank you. Thank you very much. We have I mean, the explanations you gave just reminds one of the, you know, green revolution in east in South Asia many years ago, which is really, as you put it, a combination of, you know, do you have improved varieties of seeds, do you have fertilizer, do you have irrigation water? Especially when the farmer wants it, not when the farmer needs it, not when the government thinks no. So those sort of things constitute, and of course, agronomic practices conveyed through extension. It never ceases to amaze one that Africa is still full of green areas that really have not seen this revolution. And I think some of the actors you emphasize on the ground will be very, very important, mayors, you know, during the pandemic, many, many people now food is being grown in cities and the rooftops of houses and things. So mayors are important in this and others as well. Thank you very much.

Witney, you specifically wrote, mentioned, AGOA, which is due to expire in 2025. Quite a tricky time to be expiring given the current balance of power. And of course, as you've mentioned initially when it was established, you know, that was bipartisan support. And I think on many Africa issues, one continues to see that, and we hope. But then how would you advise the administration to proceed in the renewal of AGOA, in particular, what would you like to see changed, if at all, in the new iteration?

Witney Schneidman [00:44:43] Yeah. Thanks. Thanks, Aloysius, for that question. So as I said, as I said earlier, AGOA has been, so the backbone of the US-Africa commercial relationship for almost a quarter century now. And as you say, it's coming up, it's set to expire in 2025. So I think we have a fundamental question, you know, what do we do about that? And, you know, from my point of view, off the bat, I'd love to see it extended for another ten years. And I think it's quite important that we do extend it for, for ten years. Now, when it was renewed in 2015 for ten years, one of the things that Congress asked the AGOA beneficiary countries to do was to develop national utilization strategies. So there are today there are about 38 countries that benefit from AGOA. Only about 16 have national utilization strategies. That 16, 14 have reported on, on what they've been doing. For those countries that have reported, we see a marked increase in the utilization of AGOA, sometimes 80%, sometimes 300%, sometimes 3,000%. And let me just be very clear. I'm not talking about oil or oil and natural resources. I'm talking about products that are manufactured, light manufactured, because that was really the whole intent of the legislation.

So, one, I would like to see it extended for ten years. Secondly, I would like to see the U.S. and AGOA beneficiary governments working more closely together to upgrade the utilization. I mean, some countries like, [inaudible] it's responsible for some 20, 30,000 jobs in the [inaudible] today. Kenya has really utilized it, Botswana, Ghana, South Africa, of course. But more countries need to utilize it. So that's, that's one thing that I would like to see. A second issue and this is this is a tough issue, I think. And that's the issue of reciprocity. When, so AGOA, it's, it's known as a non-reciprocal trade agreement. We unilaterally lowered our tariffs and duties to zero on nearly 6000 products coming from the continent. And the only requirement was that countries had to be moving toward economic or political reform. Well, that was 25 years ago. Well, today, the EU in particular has what's known as economic partner agreements with a number of countries that actually puts US goods and services at a disadvantage.

I use this example a lot and it's highly relevant, if a US company like GE makes a refrigerator in the U.S. and exports it from Miami, it will land in Cape Town facing an 18% tariff. If GE makes that same refrigerator in Germany and exports it from Hamburg, it'll land in Cape Town facing a 2% tariff. So who does that discriminate against, it discriminates against the American worker and the South African consumer. So I think as we go to think about AGOA 2.0, to get reciprocity in those sectors where U.S. goods and services are being discriminated against and to get most favored nation treatment in those sectors, I think that would be an important step forward. Another issue is governance. When AGOA was passed into law, it was at a time the end of the Cold War, a number of African governments were sort of moving toward democratic governance and elections, and AGOA was meant to be an incentive to do that. And I think today we need to separate our trade policy as an instrument of governance from other instruments that we have.

This in no way should be connotated that the US is backing off our commitment to democratic government in Africa or in any other part of the world. But what we've seen is that when there's a coup or when there is a war and we deny a country AGOA benefits, who loses? Not those people responsible for the coup or the war. But it's usually those folks who are manufacturing items to export to the United States, and it's largely women. We've seen that over and over again in Madagascar in 2007. We see in Ethiopia today. Right. And I think we need to move to a situation where, where, you know, once you're in AGOA, you're in AGOA or, or it's reviewed every five years because we need, we need that continuity to increase utilization. We need that continuity for partnership, and we need

that continuity for our, our companies who are investing in Africa. So that's, that's one other area that I think we need to give attention to.

And then I guess the last point relates to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, which is being implemented. The AfCFTA has the potential of being a real game changer on the continent because it's going to make the largest free trade area in the world. And so it's really important that AGOA 2.0 is sort of positive sum as it relates to the implementation of the AfCFTA. And again, this is where I think the national utilization strategies can be beneficial, because if a government is asking what is our comparative advantage in exporting to the United States, it can also be asking— is my time up? I know, I'll finish shortly. No but they can also be asking, what's our comparative advantage for trading in the region too? And that just takes the dialogue in a completely different direction.

So I think we're in a good position. It's important to note that Ambassador Tai will be hosting all Africa trade ministers on Tuesday for an AGOA ministerial. Wamkele Mene, the secretary general of the AfCFTA said that they're going to be signing an MOU with USTR. So we need to keep an eye on what that is. But I'm hopeful that we can use this, this summit to revitalize the AGOA process and that we don't wait 'til the month before AGOA's going to expire to renew it so that we can, you know, get a decent amount of time, maybe six months in advance so we can have a smooth transition.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [00:52:08] Very, very good. I think the idea of delinking, as you said, the economic side of AGOA from what used to be some might argue obsessive focus on governance is particularly important. I will watch out for this MOU as you mentioned, because it's important as well. Landry, in your piece, you, you, you titled 'How to Advance U.S. Africa Relations Through Emerging Technologies,' you argue that the US has a role to play in the development of African digital infrastructure and closing the skills gap. There are really two things it'd be great for you to elucidate on. What should Africans themselves do, right, to embrace what is, what the US support might look like? Right. And secondly, what exactly do you expect the US both government and business to do in terms of helping to close the gap?

Landry Signé [00:53:09] Thank you. Thank you very much. Extremely important. If I may. Before coming here, I want to highlight some of the great points made by my colleagues. So as Danielle was mentioning, urbanization and cities are extremely important and having even a foreign policy also focusing on those dynamics will be important. Between 2015 and 2030, the continent will

see a drastic increase in the number of cities. So, for example, will go from 3 to 5 cities of more than 10 million inhabitants and from 6 to 17 cities of more than 5 million inhabitants. So when we think about business, for some corporation, it's better to do business only with Lagos than to go to a different country. Lagos would have more people than many countries for example in Nigeria. So that is a key dimension and another key one.

Why the work that Danielle is doing is so important is agriculture and agri-industry is, so those are part of what we call here at the Brookings Institution, industries without smokestacks. And those industries are critical because they share characteristic of traditional industries or traditional manufacturing. They, they absorb a high quantity of moderately skilled worker. They are, they produce tradable goods or services. And they also have relatively high productivity. So we have, of course, agriculture, agri-industry, ICT base type of development. And more importantly, given the current context, they are also greener sectors of the economy. So that's why we say an industry without smokestacks. So extremely important point to make here as well.

And on AGOA, so I totally agree with what Witney said. And perhaps a small addition is the fact that it is extremely important when a given country is sanctioned, not just, of course, as we mentioned, the people up in allies, but also other countries which are leveraging on the supply chain, the subregional value creation and supply chains to produce other products to be exported globally or sought nationally. So, so the sanction penalize, of course, the leader, but not much the leader, they penalize the woman, the young people who are working, they penalize American investors who committed because they were expecting to receive benefit for years, if not decades, but also penalize well-behaving countries which are relying on, on supplies from those countries or which were providing or which were supplier of the other countries.

So I think it really the US government can innovate on how to still, why not penalize those leaders who maybe, who may be misbehaving without jeopardizing US interests and jeopardizing citizens interests and jeopardizing regional integration because those will have been part of a broader continental chain. So, so, so that is another point that I just wanted to, to make very quickly. So now when we speak about the how African countries can better leverage technology, I think intentionality matter. And that is also what has happened with AGOA or with CAADP or the initiative with the program for infrastructure development in Africa and other intentionality matter when leaders this in a couple of dimensions that I like to bring in bridging the implementation gap.

So it's the policy ambiguity, the level of policy ambiguity and the level of political conflict. Level of policy ambiguity is explained by the extent to which we have the epistemic communities of scholar and expert on the topic who are converging and who believe that a given solution is the one which would be implemented by policy maker and deliver of policy, of political conflict is related to the political economy. So the extent to which the given policy, no matter if it is the right solution or no. Whether you have a convergence within a broad variety of stakeholders to foster, to accelerate the success or to be a barrier in the implementation of those policy. So in the, in the current context, I think we have a low policy ambiguity. Most experts believe that leveraging the emerging technologies of the fourth industrial revolution, developing comprehensive national strategy, multi-stakeholder engagement are the ways to foster a more prosperous and inclusive future for the continent.

But some of the barriers, as I mentioned before, include infrastructure, and that is an area where the US shall be able to play an incredibly important role, especially in terms of digital infrastructure, given the global leadership that the US is playing. But who speaking about digital digitalization, digital transformation also speaks about cybersecurity, especially some studies which were made a few years ago when I was drafting a piece on cybersecurity, many of the critical centers in terms of presidencies, websites of presidencies, of including of defense and security ministries among other at the time who are being hacked in matters of minute. So if a presidency website could be hacked in a matter of minutes, what about the citizen? What about the corporation?

So it is very concerning, especially at the, the hackers in the collective imaginary here, people will think that Africa are the one generating cyber insecurity because some will receive emails saying that from a prince or princess needing to transfer some resources. But the most threatening, let's say, actors in terms of cyber insecurity are the advanced economy and, and the other emerging economies, because this asymmetry of capacity, so they have the capacity, the capability to destroy critical infrastructure. And that is and that's why collaboration with players like the US is really important to help addressing some of those challenges.

But we cannot speak about the future of technology without speaking about skills. Without speaking about the human capital, without speaking about bridging the labor skill mismatch, so addressing the labor skills mismatch and training the African who will be aligned with the future of work. So and we have a report that we have analyzing our so we with the Africa Growth Initiative here, which will be released next year, and my own book I just received the update from Cambridge

University Press, 'Africa's Fourth Industrial Revolution,' which will also be released in April, was supposed to be released in February, postponed for a reason. But again, I have so much that I want to say, but I think I should pause now.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:01:06] Thank you all very much. I think you've been very, very generous with your time in listening. Let's pivot now to the audience in case you have any questions for our panelists. I believe, Izzy, you have some microphones or comments, feedback, questions that people may want to ask before we go to our online audience. Yeah, that's one here. If you could just state your name and then. Thank you. Yeah.

Audience Member [01:01:36] Hi, my name is James Beard. I'm an Air Force officer and I've spent some time on the continent. And we haven't talked much about China's role in all this and their development goals as well. And I wonder if those are still as active as they had been pre-pandemic or if we've seen some changes there and how that would affect some of the things we're talking about.

Witney Schneidman [01:01:58] Right. And so, we, any, right. That's in front of, over there, let's take two at a time, yeah.

Audience Member [01:02:07] My name is Piroska Mohacsi Nagy. I work for the London School of Economics. Congratulate the panel and this very succinct but very rich report ahead of the Africa Summit. I would just like to make one point, and that relates to the AGOA argument. I fully agree that it should be renewed and I would be very happy to share our research, which actually if you go around and we showed the AGOA example with all the, you know, little, you know, shortcomings, but we show it as an example based on research of, based on evidence that that this type of approach is very beneficial if there is continuity. I very much agree. So maybe we can collaborate there. But I think it was an excellent AGOA 2.0 let's go for it.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:03:01] That's great. Let's take this to, before we go to the others, I think Sakina please do get the details of the lady who just spoke, because AGOA is an area of continuing work for AGI, everybody on this panel is working on this. But on the China point, obviously AGOA was bi bi partisan. If you want a bi partisan relationship in the nation's capital, mention China. So why don't I leave that to Witney? What do you think in response to the question.

Witney Schneidman [01:03:33] Thanks for that question about China. It's a really important issue. You know, I think we fall into a trap, frankly, of looking at Africa through the lens of China. Yeah. And we just have to look at Africa for Africa's sake, and I think this summit will, will go a long

way to that. But having said that, I mean, China's presence on the continent is very real. I think in 2009, that's when China overtook the U.S. as Africa's largest trading partner. Today, our two-way trade with Africa is about \$60 billion. China is almost five times as large. And it's really quite significant. The Belt and Road Initiative, you know, there are a lot of airports, ports, roads, buildings that are there because of that. But I think it's really important to draw the distinction of the business models.

You know, the Chinese business model is government to government. The best example, current best example is the standard gauge railroad in Kenya from Mombasa to Nairobi. I mean, that was just government to government, a \$4 billion railroad that seems to have no commercial sustainability and that's imposed a lot of debt on the Kenyan government. And I think that needs to be a real conversation, not only with our partners in China, but our partners in Africa. You know, when, when an infrastructure financing is made available from the U.S. or the World Bank, the requirement is, is that that tender is put out to, to tender. So a government can make a decision based on price and based on quality of service. That doesn't happen in the China, in the China Africa dynamic. It's very, it's incredibly opaque. So that's one very important distinction. And I think that needs to be an active source of conversation.

Another is— and this is a really big distinction— when you look at U.S. companies investing in Africa, in virtually every company, you'll find either an African who's a chairman, CEO, CFO, a CIO, COO or CTO. You just don't see that in Chinese companies. And I think that goes to the whole model. And I think this is really why there's such an interest to have U.S. companies in Africa, because when U.S. companies come, they hire locally, they train, they invest locally. And that's, that's really our comparative advantage. And then we conform to global best practices, or we try to. And most most most companies take that very seriously in terms of anti-corruption, in terms of labor standards, in terms of environment, environmental standards. And I think this is where our companies can really be engines of private sector led economic development. And I think that's, you know, that's to our credit, and that's something that has a great deal to offer the continent and to the United States as well.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:06:55] Thank you. Thank you very much. I think yours was a comment, right?

Witney Schneidman [01:06:58] Yeah, I definitely want to see that research.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:07:02] Exactly, so should we take one more. One, two.

Audience Member [01:07:05] Good morning. Thank you, guys. I loved the presentation. I love the information. I could be here all day hearing more about the ITC, and agriculture, etc. I am Angela Pashayan, professor at American University, Ph.D., graduate from Howard University. My expertise is in extreme poverty reduction on the continent of Africa, particularly in Kenya. Mine is kind of a question, kind of a comment, I'm not sure how, you know, you want to put it, but more on the point of reciprocity. And when we talk about reciprocity for Africa and we talk about utilization of strategy, I think it's very important to acknowledge the origins of how we started working with the continent, whether it was a good way or it was a bad way. And specifically, when we talk about like the 18%, the taxes on the GE refrigerator, how much can we extract from the continent? You know, after a while, reciprocity, you have to think about fairness overall when you quantify what has been taken from the continent. Maybe we should be taxed 50%. Do you see what I'm saying.

So when you use the numbers, not the feeling of fairness or that kind of thing, when you quantify what has been robbed from the continent, then you have to be very gingerly when you speak about reciprocity, because perhaps we shouldn't be able to send refrigerators there at all based on what we've taken from the continent. So I'm not saying that, you know, in our trade affairs that we should come out with nothing. Yes, we have to look out for ourselves, and we should come out with something. But I think we have to be very calculated. We have to use a particular strategy in how we talk about these things and then maybe even play them up as part of our strategy that we are allowing 18% tax because of this or that for a period of five years or for a period of ten more years, and then we demand a lower percentage. But I think we have to be very calculated, use strategy to think about what we play up and what we don't play up, and use our position with strategic, with more strategic thinking instead of just sort of talking about reciprocity when we maybe are kind of putting our foot in a place we shouldn't.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:09:46] Great. Thank you. Thank you very much. Let's take, I see one and then we're going to, and if you, second question, please make sure there's a question mark at the end of it. And briefly.

Audience Member [01:10:01] My name is George Walker. I'm a tax attorney here in Washington, DC, international tax, to be more specific. And so I do have a question. And it's just simply especially in light of the, the PAPSS adoption earlier this year, the Pan-African payment

systems, I'm just curious what you guys think are the current prospects for any sort of common currency on the African continent? I recognize that we shouldn't fall into the trap of looking at Africa through the China lens. And so I don't want to fall in the other trap of looking at Africa through the EU lens. But, you know, that said, I'm just curious what you guys think of the prospects for common currencies or perhaps regional currencies on the continent, especially in light of the, the many currencies that are there and some of the dialogue that's happening around there.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:10:48] Great. Thank you. Thank you very much. Landry, do you want to very quickly on current common currency.

Landry Signé [01:10:56] Absolutely. So ultimately, I think that many of the—.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:11:03] Thank you. No, go ahead.

Landry Signé [01:11:05] Okay. So I want to say that ultimately, I was just discussing with the commissioner, I think a couple of days ago, the African Union Commission on Trade and Industry, and we were speaking about how important the customs union will be. And after the customs union, hopefully also a currency, so many challenges are to be addressed, but also a question of the coalition of the willing. So you probably already know the JFK quote that we will go to the moon not because it is easy, but because it is difficult. Or the Nelson Mandela one, it seems impossible until it is done. So I think those are the dimensions to take into consideration. But why, but it's extremely important because many of the transaction, which are made on the continent have to go to international before coming back to the continent, and then you have so, so this is a monumental lost for not just in terms of processes, but also symbolically speaking, to trade between Cameroon and Chad or between Nigeria and Benin, if you have to come through New York or through London, I think it is not necessarily the most optimal way of doing for the Africa that you want.

So I think that this is a goal you will have, it will be complex, but it is not because this complex it is impossible and similarity that people would not believe the AfCFTA could be launched, the AfCFTA is the largest trade agreement in the world after the WTO, by number of country, launched in one of the local time in history between the signing, the ratification and the official launch and with many protocol. And this is incredibly meaningful, especially given the heterogeneity in African countries. So it's a work in progress and we are there as a think tank to propose options and to continue to engage with the policy maker on the continent and in other places to reach those [inaudible].

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:13:22] Yeah. Thank you. Just before I bring Danielle into the reciprocity question on perhaps that which you mentioned, as I think this Pan African payment system, if you go to our foresight Africa 2022 edition, it's outside there, you can pick up your copy and also it's online, and the one for this year, the one for this year, we actually have the head, the CEO of the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System wrote a very, very brilliant essay. For many people basically, the idea is basically that a Ghanaian imported from Botswana basically pays for the import in Ghanaian city cities, and the exporter in Botswana receives Botswana Pula, completely wiping out the need for transaction and expensive foreign exchange to use. To use Witney's word, this is a game changer if we can really push forward and continue to roll it out and it therefore, in a way it calls into question the whole notion of a single currency because, you know, there are so many, many, many reasons why we need to focus on technology, we need to focus on things like PAPSS rather than the excessive focus on a single currency.

Why do I say that? In the EU, not all European countries are members of the EU of the, of the euro, and they are the largest trading bloc in the world. In Southeast Asia, there is no single currency and there is no debate— I used to live in Manila for many years— there is no debate on the single currency and as the second most dynamic and largest trading bloc on the planet and we keep debating this single currency when other options like the PAPSS is really, and technology enabled options are really the way to go. Above all else, single currency demands tremendous institutional and political capital. I mean, the European, the idea of the EU, as we all know, that no more wars in Europe, well until, nobody, Russia didn't get the memo. But anyway so you know, that's really the basis. And therefore you have the, the Germans, the French rallying around to create the EU, that kind of visionary leadership in terms of we need to see that for a single currency to take off and the absence of those is going to be very difficult. I know I've taken enough airtime. I think there was a comment on reciprocity that you wanted to comment on.

Danielle Resnick [01:16:07] Well, I think I mean, Witney's better placed from a technical perspective to address the reciprocity. I think from a normative perspective, you know, I really like your intervention and I think it's not just related to trade. You know, it's kind of relevant to, to all these domains we're talking about in these negotiations. And I really say it with regards to food as well. I mean, there's a big, I think, resurgence of food sovereignty movements on the continent.

And so some of the push by US companies of biotechnology and yes, you've got to adopt our higher yielding seeds, you know, is really hitting push back particularly from civil society, not necessarily leaders, but civil society on well, you know, how much is this going to cost us? Is this putting us into a cycle of debt? And I think being conscious of those debates, at least, you know, and making sure that our engagement is on kind of a level playing field and thinking about those ideas of fairness is really critical. And I think lends weight to what you were saying is that we're kind of negotiating in good faith, vis-a-vis, maybe some, some other types of geopolitical partners on the continent.

Witney Schneidman [01:17:08] Right. Right. And just me follow up. It's a fascinating question. And I sort of heard it on different levels. You know, I heard it on the level that Howard French writes about, his most recent book, which is incredibly profound and highly relevant and an important conversation to have, the way I was referring to it is more like today's sense. And here's my real concern about the tariff imbalance. Not so much about the refrigerator and the big corporate. My concern is a bipartisan consensus in Congress, because if US companies start feeling that, you know, here with AGOA, which is zero tariffs, zero tariffs on 6000 products. Right. If, if, if U.S. companies start feeling that they're being discriminated against going into the market and they start complaining to Congress, then then that puts pressure on this bipartisan consensus that's been driving US policy for two and a half decades. So I hear what you're saying a lot. And, you know, it's a complicated issue for me from my perspective. And I thank you for that.

Landry Signé [01:18:17] Value-based. Value-based, I really love your intervention because the [inaudible] also for the value-based engagement. So it is not exclusively transactional. How do we put things into a broader context? And I think probably this administration has a, so I released a piece on a value-based foreign policy about a couple of years ago when I was called to testify before the Senate on those question, I think promoting value-based policies are important not just for Africa and for African American and overall for the world also.

And Mr. Uche, allow me to slightly disagree with you on the notion of currency. I do agree that the short-term focus should not be excessive on the common currency because there are other steps, there are othe tools, they are technology. But I think that if we want to create the one Africa, I mean, the U.S. has a currency and the US is made of many states, almost as many states as, as the continent of Africa. Of course, they require convergence or harmonization require a lot of work to be

done before getting there. So that's why I fully agree with you, is that some were excessively focused on the single currency for right now and then not necessarily be doing the, having the right approach. However, ultimately through a hopefully a successful implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, but and then after that of the Custom Union. So after those will be successful, I think the time will be right to advance the question of acquiring a common currency.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:20:02] All right. I have one hand there and the professor here. Let's take them and then one or two questions from there. We have some questions from online. Go ahead. Your name, please and question.

Audience Member [01:20:12] Hi. Cooper Roberts. I work for a NGO. US aid as I'm sure you're all aware, is not present in every embassy around the world. Not in Italy, Japan, Australia, Chile. Anyways, there's, there's a number of embassies in which U.S. aid is not present. I'm wondering by when do you think U.S. aid will no longer be present in Africa?

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:20:43] Yeah, let's, we have one of our distinguished advisory panelists from AGI, Professor, thank you.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:20:55] Yeah. We can hear you. Yeah.

Research Assistant [01:21:00] Sorry, it went out.

Research Assistant [01:21:01] Oh, really? He's a professor, we can hear him. His voice can carry. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Audience Member [01:21:13] No. Yeah. Thank you very much. A privilege for me to be here. I just got back from Africa, by the way, and I used to head the African Economic Research Consortium, which is a Pan-African entity in the business of capacity building. And lately, the, I really liked your booklet. I had a chance actually to review that yesterday. And it really gets into all the key, you know, essential theories. I'm going to add a couple of things and then maybe a couple of questions. As it turned out, one of the things I liked about this Biden Africa strategy, the strategy that you have seen is really based on a consultative process. And it turns out the diaspora are at the center, and they want to be involved. So I had a chance to actually go to the house and ways, means staff, I had a meeting with this group through the institute for Africa. And then also had a chance to speak to the White House staff and so on. So I think they're trying to come up with a win win situation, not just simply one sided.

So my question for Whitney was when I went to the house and ways means, one thing that was very striking was this was bipartisan is there are Republicans, there are Democrats. But I was thinking that you were thinking of another alternative modality for engagement with Africa beyond AGOA. So it's not clear that in 2025, AGOA will be renewed. And even they're actually thinking about a post-AGOA engagement. And part of what's going on now is actually intended to be a post AGOA engagement. I was wondering if we have more information, it would seem, based on what you're saying, you're kind of linked to the legislative branch as well. It's not just, and the other thing, I think, Daniel, I really like what you were saying about food systems and food security. One thing that they haven't really paid much attention to is entrepreneurship. You know, agricultural entrepreneurship is also linked with digital transformation. You have now all kinds of technology-based entrepreneurs, like in farm in Kenya. Right. And and fintechs. And again, there was no mention of finance, financial sector is the big one. And the FTC, FDA is one place where they're going to get innovation of finance.

So really, what is your point, your your your your your thinking about agriculture, entrepreneurship, by the way they're all linked. Yeah. Digital transformation. And I'm clear that the Biden administration is very, very committed to helping in digital transformation. But let me say one more thing. I think. What one point. I think. No, no—.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:24:26] Very briefly.

Audience Member [01:24:26] Just underline, I'm going to underline everything based on capacity building. We need a lot of engagement from the U.S. in terms of capacity building so that at the end of the game we'll be self-sufficient. Thank you.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:24:42] Thank you very much. Just one last question. Here we go.

Audience Member [01:24:45] Thank you. I'm [inaudible], I actually, I'm an economist and I used to work with AGI before. So during the last US Africa summit, when we did the stocktake, we saw that the US investment is really low compared to the Chinese investment. It was around 1%, the stock compared to China, which is 3%. And then in terms of diversification, Chinese, our investments are really diversified, but US is really in mining and extractives and I know what you focus so far is talking about digital technology, agriculture and so on, but we need to look at the mining and how we can make that also part of the US strategy to accompany developed countries in green transition and also the work that they are trying to do. So in the, I think I want, I wanted to know. So we talked a lot about trade, but I think we need to have some figures really be in this, because what gets measured

gets done in terms of investment amount, the stock and the flows and then how to diversify it in different areas, especially those who are not only in capital intensive sectors but in job creating sectors as well.

The other one question is on accountability. So when you look at Power Africa, the objectives were 60 million people being connected, 30,000 megawatts of electricity. When you look at the report of 2021, 1300 megawatt. So we are really far from the promises of Power Africa. But it mentioned 31 million people are newly connected. So I was wondering about the role of AGI I think you can play a high role in not doing, testifying and following on the promises, especially on Prosper Africa, which is coming and again on the investment, I think we need to, to see, for example, that if the US investments have been concentrated in Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, but not in a country like mine, Madagascar, we need to see how many investment officers or commercial attachés are in those US representations to really promote the investment and trade. Thank you.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:27:13] Thank you. Thank you very much. I think luckily, many of the questions are comments as well. So very, very quickly, rapid fire. Witney, any of the three speakers? Anything you want to respond? And then Danielle and Landry.

Witney Schneidman [01:27:28] Yes. Just quickly post-AGOA. Yeah. So, so Landry and I were two days ago meeting with the ambassador, the African ambassadorial diplomatic corps. They play such an important role in shaping AGOA. They did when it was passed, all the ambassadors came together with a letter that was sent to Congress. All 48 ambassadors signed it, said, we want it. So the African voice becomes so important to this. And yes, we're talking about post-AGOA. I don't think anybody knows what it looks like, conversations like this are so critical. The bottom line is that we have to stay engaged and really shape that right now. I just want to go to Madagascar because this is such a long way. It's a, figuratively, because this is a perfect example of disconnecting sort of the governance and the trade, because after the coup and Madagascar, Madagascar was out of AGOA, it took like seven years for Madagascar to get back to those trade levels because you you attracted a lot of investment in particularly in apparel companies, Levi's is out there and others. And so there's a lot of opportunity to, I think, build that back again.

At the last point, I mean, U.S. stock of investment is, is more than China's, \$50 billion today are historical investment. And I think that's important to consider because some of those companies have been there a long time. Ford Motor Company, most, best example, 75 years. And they just

invested \$1,000,000,000 in their operations in South Africa, closed Brazil, closed India to concentrate on their South African operations for export to Europe. And that's job creating and that's what we want to see.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:29:23] All right, very quickly, thanks, Witney. Danielle.

Danielle Resnick [01:29:26] Yeah, so, so quickly on the, on the agricultural dimension. Absolutely. Right. And actually, this was going to be some of my concluding comments. But bring them up sooner. I mean, the focus on agro-preneurship, as it's called, is fundamental. And I think, you know, COVID-19 just really showed the vast array of innovation that you can have in the entire agricultural value chain to deal with different bottlenecks, you know, things like Hello Tractor, where, you know, entrepreneurs can just kind of rent out tractors to people who can't afford them full time. Some of the amazing things that [inaudible] Foods was being able to do in Kenya and linking with, you know, directly from the farm to informal retailers through digital technology, that there definitely needs to be a key focus. I think bringing in more kind of US, you know, investors for that in the private sector and also some of the kind of capacity training, business to business training.

On the capacity strengthening, trying to link it with the US aid question because I do see, I can't say when US aid will no longer be in the region, but we do see a shift in a lot of their strategizing in the region which is become more of this capacity strengthening. A lot of projects I now see coming out from them is focusing, of course, first on localization, but secondly on trying to build up within African research institutes and scientists to be kind of delivering the technical assistance that they used to be outsourcing overseas. And lastly, I can't agree more on the accountability. I think that's actually key for the entire summit, to be honest, these convenings, we need to get something out of them and see the tracking over time. Yeah.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:31:07] Very quickly from there, we haven't exactly done justice to our online audience, but one of the questions from William Anderson, very intriguing, quite interesting question from the School of Public and International Affairs, University of Virginia University, Virginia Technology University. The idea that the visiting leaders in the nation's capital next week will be knocking on many, many doors in order to discuss Africa. They'll have to go to DFC. They'll have to go to Power Africa, they will have to go to US aid, they will have to go to MCC, Prosper Africa, etc., etc., etc. Why is there no integrated agency focused on Africa in the U.S. government? Witney, I'm sure you're ready to answer to this very quickly.

Witney Schneidman [01:32:01] Well, first of all, the heads of state will not be going to DFC., DFC will be going to the heads of state, to make that clear. But, but the real question is, this is exactly what Prosper Africa was designed to do, to bring together the 17 U.S. government agencies that have programs and resources.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:32:24] Did you say 17?

Witney Schneidman [01:32:26] It is 17, yeah.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:32:26] You heard it from him. That's a lot of capacity that the Africans don't necessarily have the capacity to interface, but anyway.

Witney Schneidman [01:32:34] Exactly, what an alphabet soup of agencies and Prosper is designed just to bring, to become a one stop shop for access to MCC, the DFC. I can name them all, but I won't do that.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:32:46] Okay. Landry Basically looking ahead to the week coming, one single thing you would like to see a commitment from the African side and one from the U.S. side.

Landry Signé [01:33:07] Well, I'm used to speaking about these things. So I think, as Witney mentioned before, the business summit should be an annual summit, because if not, how do you do business if you are not engaging and engaging at the highest level? So that's the first thing. So we need to meet often businesspeople at the highest level should meet and engage, that's one dimension from I think, which is related to both the Africa on the U.S. side. So the other dimension, I also want to see a deeper commitment beyond the memorandum, in memorandum of understanding in terms of a few things.

One, the African Continental Free Trade Area. So the U.S. has committed and is committed to support. But but we need an anchoring, we need a disruptive way of engaging and of supporting. As much as I like capacity building, I think we should not fall into the trap also because sometime you say we're not to do the important things. So not to invest in infrastructure, you cannot trade without infrastructure, but then you can offer a few scholarship. I mentioned that you are doing capacity building, right? So I think we need also investment in actual real physical capacities and not just the symbolic or symbolic one.

And finally, the African Union development agencies, which is the equivalent of the United Nations development program. So the goal is to really see, it is implementing agency of the African Union. And I'm shocked that it is not discussed in many of the policy sphere, that's why I want a clear,

deep commitment to support the African own agencies aiming at implementing Africa own agenda and development agenda. So I would stop there.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:35:03] Witney, one commitment that—.

Witney Schneidman [01:35:06] One each. So from the African side, I'd like to see an invitation to host a summit in Africa in two years for the U.S. government and President Biden. Yeah, from the U.S. side, I would like to see a commitment to a digital moonshot to bring a billion people online. Currently about 600 million to a billion and at a cost, I think it's estimated \$100 billion. How are we going to mobilize it? I think we should put that out as a goal.

Witney Schneidman [01:35:34] And Danielle, one commitment.

Danielle Resnick [01:35:37] Yeah, well, I think one on the U.S. side that I've already alluded to is having some type of mechanism to track commitments, because I think there can be some summit fatigue over time if we don't have some coordinated way of tracking things. On the African side, I agree with this idea of having it in Africa, but to make it more inclusive, you know, heads of state come and go as we're talking about Biden versus Trump or Obama administration, we have the same on the other side. So commitments made by heads of state are, can be volatile. So kind of bringing in a variety of more actors I mentioned local actors, civil society and the African business community I think is really key.

Aloysius Uche Ordu [01:36:15] Right. Thank you very much. To conclude, there are just so many richness in the tapestry of the conversation this morning. What I'd like to do is to basically alert you to watch out in the coming week. We do have President Masisi of Botswana, who'll be here on the 13th of December to give a keynote speech. And this is clearly one of the best managed countries on the African continent. And you may be interested in making time to check our website. He'll be speaking here on the December 13th. We are also hoping that President Hichilema of Zambia will be here on the 16th to give a keynote speech. This is a guy who ran for office five times a businessman and finally made it to the reins of power and really, really unleashing tremendous, tremendous economic and political reforms. And you may want to not miss on what he has to say.

And finally watch our website because we're still in discussions with the newly elected president Ruto of Kenya, who may also be on our platform during the week ahead. So a lot happening, and we know you have choices elsewhere, but please watch our website because these are some of the things that we have in stock for you. On behalf of the Africa Growth Initiative here at

Brookings Institution, I would like to really thank my colleagues, Landry and Witney. And Danielle, thank you very much. And thank you all for coming.