

**Testimony by U.S. Department of State
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Subcommittee on African Affairs and Global Health
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Chairman Payne, Ranking Member Smith, members of the Subcommittee – thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. This is my first appearance before this subcommittee, and I very much appreciate your holding this hearing, and your interest in this critical issue. It is one that will affect the entire world – but which the poorest and most vulnerable, a great many of whom are in Africa – will feel the soonest and the most severely.

Your session is also very timely: I have just returned from the most recent round of UN Climate Convention Negotiations, at which it was decided how the international community will proceed with next steps under the UN Climate Convention. It was a meeting in which the Africans played an important role. From my meetings with the African delegates there, it is clear that policy making on climate and its related energy and land use issues is in flux. Countries are grappling with both opportunities and challenges – and very much looking to the US for our engagement and support in working with them in a global effort to address the climate problem.

The Copenhagen Accord and the International State of Play

Let me start with a few brief words of background. We are all aware of the seriousness of the climate problem. It is an issue which has garnered an unprecedented level of international attention. This is perhaps most tellingly represented by the session in Copenhagen this past December: more than 120 heads of state participated – including 23 from Africa.

At that meeting, due in large part to the personal participation of both the President and Secretary Clinton, we adopted the so called “Copenhagen Accord”. This agreement represents a significant milestone in our collective effort to address the critical problem of climate change. It is a straightforward and direct text – providing high-level guidance rather than technical guidelines. For the first time, it gives formal recognition to the level of effort needed to address the climate problem, calling for countries to limit greenhouse gas emissions to a level that will hold global temperature rise to less than 2 degrees C. It calls for both developed and major developing countries (and others who wish to do so), to list—or inscribe—the specific actions or targets they intend to take to cut or limit their emissions. It calls for full transparency, requiring the development of specific guidelines for measurement, reporting and verification, as well as analysis and consultation on policies and measures, giving all countries confidence that we are all carrying out our commitments, and enabling us to assess our efforts to control emissions. It sets landmark financing provisions: for total prompt start financing among international partners approaching \$30 billion over the next three years, and a goal of jointly mobilizing \$100 billion a year by 2020 from public and private sources, in the context of meaningful implementation of the Accord. It calls for the establishment of a new Technology Mechanism, a new climate fund, enhanced action on adaptation, and creates new incentives for forest protection.

African nations were active in the negotiations of the agreement in Copenhagen. The session marked the first time the region had a common position, developed by the African Union. The Copenhagen Accord specifically mentions Africa among the target regions in its adaptation and finance provisions. The African Union endorsed the Accord at its Summit in early 2010, and encouraged member states to associate themselves with it. We have been working actively to encourage all African countries to formally associate with the Accord, and to date 31 have done so.

The US Role

President Obama is unwavering in his commitment to combating global climate change. He and Secretary Clinton have stated that the United States has a responsibility to address the global climate crisis by taking robust action at home and assisting the countries that are most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. We are the world's largest historic emitter, and after China, the world's largest current emitter. We are also the biggest and wealthiest economy in the world – and we are looked to provide solutions and to harness our incredible domestic ingenuity and technological know-how to make a difference. The world pays attention to what we do and with our responsibility comes an enormous opportunity. I want to commend the House of Representatives for moving our country one vital step down the right path by passing the American Clean Energy and Security Act. The passage of this bill has had a major impact on the nature of our international discussions and demonstrates that the United States is serious about climate change and clean energy. It is clear from the international negotiations that Congressional efforts are closely watched and the world eagerly awaits similar progress on forward looking energy and climate legislation in the Senate.

Climate Change and Africa

Africa's share of global greenhouse gas emissions is currently small – Sub-Saharan Africa has only about 6% of global emissions, while encompassing about 12% of the world's population. But in many parts of the continent, emissions are rising rapidly. For example, South Africa, as it has electrified its communities and grown its economy, has seen its emissions rise about 30% between 1990 and 2005. Deforestation in the Congo Basin is increasing with growing population and the demand for agriculture and wood products which also adds to increased emissions as this carbon sequestration source is destroyed. Avoiding future emissions growth while continuing to improve living conditions, national welfare and productivity will be a real challenge. We are already working aggressively through the Congo Basin Forest Partnership to prevent this.

However, there is enormous untapped potential to control emissions growth on the continent. On the land use side, there are significant opportunities in improved agricultural practices, and forest conservation and sustainable management, as well as agroforestry, reforestation, and rehabilitation of degraded lands. Countries in the region are already actively examining

alternative energy resources, particularly geothermal and wind energy as well as hydroelectric power and biofuels.

But if emissions are relatively modest, climate impacts on Africa are unfortunately not commensurately limited.

Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to global climate change and climate vulnerability. Climate vulnerability is the degree to which a system is susceptible to, and unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change. Americans must understand that, as challenging as addressing climate change will be for us, it will be a far greater challenge for countries that are still developing, and that in many cases, have only very limited technical and financial capacity to cope with damages. In Africa, vulnerability is exacerbated by a range of multidimensional challenges. These include endemic poverty; complex (and too often non-functioning) governance and weak or non-existent civil and government institutional systems; uncompetitive investment environments and limited access to capital, including markets, infrastructure and technology; ecosystem degradation; and frequent natural disasters and conflicts.

As you know, the President has said repeatedly that the United States views Africa as our partner and as a partner of the international community. As partners then, we must work together to address the impacts of climate change and support low-carbon development.

The litany of climate impacts on the region makes for very sobering listening – and I will only highlight a few to give you a flavor:

- Approximately 70% of families in Africa are dependent on agriculture in one way or another. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects with high confidence that agricultural production and food security in many African countries and regions are likely to be severely compromised by climate change and climate variability. Significant reductions in yield are expected to be seen by 2020 in some countries – and without major new programs, net crop revenues could fall by as much as 90% by 2100, with small scale farmers being the most affected.
- About 25% of Africa's population currently experience water stress. Also according to the IPCC, by 2020, the population at risk of increased water stress is projected to increase to between 75-250 million people due to climate change – and by 2050, water stress is projected to affect 350-600 million people. And this is only if water demand stays at the relatively modest current levels. If coupled with the increased demands for water from irrigation and industry, things get worse.
- Towards the end of the 21st century, projected sea-level rise will affect low-lying coastal areas with large populations. Adaptation costs for sea level rise are projected to amount to 5-10% of GDP or more. And much of the natural protections provided by mangroves and coral reefs are projected to be further degraded, with additional consequences for fisheries, coastal communities, and tourism.

- The health of the population is also at risk. Projected climate change-related exposures are likely to affect the health of millions through increased malnutrition, increased deaths, disease and injury due to heat-waves, floods, storms, fires and droughts, increased burden of diarrheal diseases and changes in the distribution of some infectious diseases.
- Climate change may also contribute to the emergence and longevity of conflict. A recent report co-authored by the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Institute for Security Studies identifies four major links between climate change and conflict in Africa: competition for ever more scarce water supplies; reductions in crop yields and efforts to control the use of productive arable land; displacement of populations threatened by rising sea levels and increasingly frequent and severe floods and droughts ; and the already prevalent poverty and limits to governing capacity. Climate change could tip fragile states towards socio-economic and political collapse.

Support for Africa to Meet the Challenge of Climate Change

We recognize that success in Africa will require more effective political commitment on the part of African leaders, broader engagement by local communities and civil institutions, and practical, results-oriented action on the ground. To support such action, we have proposed substantial increases in foreign assistance to help countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change, with a particularly emphasis on the most vulnerable states, such as those in Africa. But we know that additional assistance will not, by itself, automatically produce success.

The FY2010 appropriation includes approximately \$1 billion international climate efforts through the Department of State, Department of Treasury, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The President's FY2011 Budget requests about \$1.4 billion, a further increase of 38% over FY2010 for these three agencies. The US contribution is split between bilateral assistance (largely through USAID), and contributions to multilateral climate change programs through the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility, and their related climate change funds (through the Treasury and State budgets.) In addition, in FY 2011, several other agencies across the USG provide technical and financial assistance with a climate focus (approximately \$100 million), and there is an additional approximately \$400 million from non-climate specific activities that none-the-less have substantial climate co-benefits.

The fact that our climate change assistance goes through a variety of mechanisms makes it a little hard to say how much will flow to a given recipient. Nevertheless, we estimate that around 20% of our State and USAID climate assistance funds in FY2010, and around 30% of the total in the FY2011 Budget will benefit African countries. This includes bilateral, regional, and centrally managed programs, as well as contributions through multilateral funds.

When it comes to our assistance to help vulnerable countries adapt to and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, we estimate that at least 1/3 of our State and USAID adaptation assistance programs in FY2010 and our FY2011 request will support African countries in such areas as science and analysis for decision making; improved governance; and integrating adaptation into other development activities that are compromised by climate change. For

example, USAID missions in Tanzania and Rwanda are planning to integrate climate into their water programming, and a regional program working on the Okavango River basin in southern Africa will do the same.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and degradation, or REDD is another crucial component of the climate change challenge, and that challenge cannot be met without addressing deforestation in Africa. The Congo Basin is the world's second largest expanse of tropical forest, and a critical carbon "sink." The \$20.5 million that Congress directed be used for biodiversity programs in the Congo basin in FY2010 will help protect this resource, and help build REDD programs. But we recognize that our need to protect Africa's carbon "sinks" must be balanced by Africans' needs for affordable and reliable energy and building materials which the forests have traditionally provided, as well as land cleared for agriculture to feed growing populations. So our climate change and biodiversity assistance programs will help local communities grow and sustainably manage community woodlots to provide for those needs while preserving natural forests.

In concert with those efforts, our clean energy assistance programs in Africa will provide renewable energy alternatives to traditional wood burning and fossil fuels and improve energy efficiency in buildings and electrical transmission. For example, in FY2010 our USAID technical assistance programs plan to support wind energy projects in Namibia and Mozambique, geothermal power in the rift valley countries, and regional electricity grids in southern Africa. . In 2008, USAID, working with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, established a satellite data distribution portal in Kenya, called SERVIR, to provide information to improve environmental forecasts in Africa. Our programs will also help some countries that reduce emission from forests and energy use to monitor and verify those reductions, in preparation for their possible utilization in carbon trading markets being established by developed countries. In this way, our programs are designed to lead to much greater financial flows to help African nations grow their economies and provide a better future for their people.

Conclusion

In closing, let me reiterate a few key points. Global climate change is both real, and an ever accelerating threat. The US – and the world – must act quickly and aggressively to curb our emissions if we are to avoid its most severe damages. But we also have a responsibility to help those who are the least responsible and most vulnerable. We can, and should assist the world's most vulnerable people to adapt to the effects of climate change and to help support developing countries in building their capacity to develop along low emission and sustainable pathways that are resilient to changing climate. Our efforts to address the impacts of climate change and support low-carbon development in Africa will serve U.S. strategic priorities to strengthen democracy, increase investment, improve health, prevent conflict and effectively address transnational challenges in Africa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to answering any questions that you and the members of the committee might have.