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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

August 19, 2025

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Trevor Kellogg
Acting Under Secretary for International Trade
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Kellogg,

We are writing to request that the International Trade Administration (ITA) convene the Presidential Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA) and urge you to host high-level trade missions across Africa to counter the efforts of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to expand its influence in the region. PAC-DBIA and our trade missions are essential tools that have strengthened American commercial engagement with Africa. If we do not make full use of these tools and others, not only will U.S. engagement with the African continent suffer, but the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will continue to make inroads to the detriment of American interests.

The African continent and U.S.-Africa business ties are increasingly fundamental to our prosperity and security. Africa's population will double in 25 years. The continent's economies are rapidly modernizing, creating a promising opportunity for U.S. businesses and investment. But unfortunately, our current level engagement with the continent is sorely lacking and yet another example of us ceding prime economic and security opportunities to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Indeed, our presence on the continent is rapidly being eclipsed by the PRC's footprint. The PRC far outcompetes the U.S. on trade with Africa. For instance, their bilateral trade exceeds \$280 billion – four times ours – and 52 of 52 African countries trade more with the PRC than the United States. Meanwhile, a 2024 Gallup poll shows our influence on the African continent is waning, edged out by Beijing. As approval ratings of the U.S. have sunk in Africa, countries are turning to the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative and other state-subsidized investments for infrastructure, energy, and digital development, crowding out U.S. businesses. In addition, these PRC projects often show little regard for labor rights, transparency, and environmental sustainability.

In light of this competition, the U.S. must provide a meaningful alternative. Previous American initiatives have successfully advanced U.S. business and commercial interests in Africa. Established in 2014, PAC-DBIA has advised the President on ways to strengthen commercial

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engagement between the U.S. and Africa. It has proven to be an effective tool in aligning U.S. policy with business realities on the ground and ensuring our companies can sustain and compete fairly across African markets. Historically, PAC-DBIA has served as a bridge connecting U.S. businesses and African governments and identified barriers and opportunities for the expansion of American trade and investment.

Other U.S. government programs have served a similar function. ITA trade missions have helped U.S. companies secure multimillion-dollar deals, establish long-term partnerships, and deepen sectoral engagement across key African economies. These missions have opened doors in sectors such as infrastructure, digital services, and agribusiness – fields where U.S. firms bring world-class expertise and standards. And these are but two in a long list of atrophied U.S. policy tools that we must urgently utilize to outcompete the PRC in Africa.

Without PAC-DBIA and ITA engagement with Africa, as well as additional but equally critical efforts outside of the purview of the Commerce Department, we will leave an indelible void that will impact U.S. commercial diplomacy in Africa for generations to come. The reconvening of PAC-DBIA and the deployment of trade missions are a necessary first step in competing with the PRC in Africa. These actions must additionally be paired with a commitment to build mutually-beneficial, long-term partnerships with African nations and must be rooted in strategic alignment and shared values.

Accordingly, we request a briefing on the Administration's plans to revitalize U.S.-Africa economic policy, which should include an update on the status of PAC-DBIA. We also request a written response regarding the Commerce Department's assessment of PRC activity in the region, and whether you will commit to undertake a trade mission to the continent. We request that this briefing and response be provided by no later than September 15, 2025.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raja Krishnamoorthi".

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member
Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party