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STATEMENT OF
General William 'Kip' Ward
COMMANDER,
UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
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Testimony to the House Armed Services Committee - Statement for the Record
General William 'Kip' Ward - Commander of United States Africa Command

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Hunter, distinguished Members of the Committee -- thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I am deeply honored to be appearing before you in my position as the Commander, United States Africa Command. It is rare that one gets the chance to build a new organization from the ground up, and I look forward to what I consider to be the opportunity of a lifetime for everyone who will be a part of this new command.

Now is the right time for USAFRICOM. The African continent's economic, social, political, and military importance in global affairs has grown tremendously. From my observations, the leaders of Africa and its island nations are increasingly demonstrating the will to provide a safe and secure environment for their citizens. My goal as Commander of USAFRICOM is to build an enduring organization with regular and sustained engagement that benefits both the citizens of the United States and the citizens of the nations in Africa. The establishment of USAFRICOM presents a tremendous opportunity to work closely with U.S. interagency partners. Working together as a team, the net result over time will be a more stable and more prosperous Africa with expanded horizons for growth and development.

When the President signed the directive establishing USAFRICOM in February, we entered what I call the design process. Following my confirmation by the Senate at the end of September, USAFRICOM became a ***command under construction*** with three key principles:

First, we are ***building the team***. With the goal of achieving full operational capability as a unified command by October 2008, USAFRICOM endeavors to be innovative in its construct. We have the opportunity, vision, and determination to redefine how the U.S. military cooperates

with and complements the efforts of its U.S., international, and non-governmental partners in Africa.

We would like to realize a complementary mix of Department of Defense civilian and military staff and representatives from across the interagency departments of our government. Our intention is to move beyond the traditional concept of liaison officers and instead have our interagency partners serve alongside their DoD counterparts, working hand in hand every day on the matters most important to making a difference in Africa. As interagency representatives bring to bear the subject matter expertise of their parent organizations, USAFRICOM will complement, not compete with, the activities of other U.S. governmental organizations. The sum of our efforts as a whole will be greater than that of any of the individual parts.

Similarly, USAFRICOM's partnership activities—enhancing friendships outside the command—will strive to build strong and lasting relationships through regular and sustained engagement with our African partners, U.S. government agencies, allies and international organizations, both governmental and private. Success in my eyes is having earned our teammates' and partners' trust and confidence in who we are and what we do.

Second, ***USAFRICOM will add value and do no harm*** to the collective and substantial on-going efforts on the continent. USAFRICOM was created to bring value-added to America's long-standing policy of security cooperation in Africa and to deliver security assistance that enhances African stability, so that development can occur and Africans can prosper. Working together with interagency partners we will focus on building strong security structures in Africa that work for our African partners. As USAFRICOM proceeds along the path to full operational capability, it is

important that we manage the expectations for the command and defuse the potential for misunderstanding about the command's purpose.

The creation of USAFRICOM provides an opportunity to harmonize US efforts to maximize the effectiveness of our nation's resources being dedicated to Africa. However, we realize that the Department of State remains the lead in U.S. foreign policy and we fully respect U.S. Chief of Mission authority when working in African nations. USAFRICOM will conduct all our activities, engagements, and communications on the continent in full coordination with our U.S. Chiefs of Mission in each African country. We value the tremendous experience and expertise our interagency partners bring to the table from having worked in Africa for decades. USAFRICOM will do everything in our power not to disrupt or confuse current and ongoing U.S. government or international partner efforts in Africa.

Obviously, a nation's professional military is very important for its continued stability and security, but so are police, border security, customs and all the other services required to protect its citizens. I firmly believe security should be defined broadly and must be approached holistically. We will work to support on-going U.S. government efforts while finding additional ways to improve security related programs with the support of the Department of Defense. These can be military-to-military activities and exercises, or enhancing efforts led by another agency like USAID, State, Treasury, Commerce, or Justice. We will also add value by collaborating with our national and international partners to focus on assisting African nations and institutions to build strong security structures that work for Africans.

Finally, USAFRICOM will seek to promote relationships and build partnerships to **enable the work of Africans** in providing for their own security. It begins with understanding our African partners' definitions of their own environment and interests and understanding the complexities

of the diverse countries and cultures across the continent. Appreciation of their perspective will allow us to jointly identify ways and means that address both African and American interests. Our intent is to build mutual trust, respect, and confidence with our partners on the continent and our international friends through sustained engagement by a single unified command dedicated solely to Africa. Advancing US interests need not be a zero sum game. We can work with our African and international partners in a way that benefits all.

USAFRICOM will directly contribute to enabling Africans to achieve stability and security. USAFRICOM will work to be a positive force in facilitating other agencies' and departments' activities when the command's core competencies can add value. We will strive to cooperate with and complement the efforts of the African Union (AU) and its African Regional Economic Communities (REC), the nations of Africa, our European allies and other partners and friends with strong interests on the continent. Having just visited the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, and the ECOWAS, CEEAC, and SADC headquarters, I was able to gain an understanding for the work being done to establish the Standby Forces in Africa.

USAFRICOM's value added to these partnerships will be evident as we understand their needs, and within our means and stated policy decisions, help them develop their own solutions. USAFRICOM will also be a learning organization that will evolve as necessary to meet our objectives. We will strive to better understand the perspectives of the many stakeholders working for the success of Africa. Through partnership, USAFRICOM intends to assist the nations of Africa in bringing security to the continent.

Before closing, I would like to reaffirm that USAFRICOM will sustain ongoing activities as it accepts missions from the other three geographic commands - U.S. European Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. Pacific

Command. The creation of USAFRICOM will allow the Department of Defense, for the first time, to view all of Africa through a single lens, and we will build upon the significant foundation that the three geographic commands and their components have built. We will continue existing capacity building efforts and create opportunities to engage with African militaries to enhance regional security.

Past activities involving small numbers of service members, such as the medical exercises MEDFLAG and MEDCAP will continue. The communications interoperability exercise called the Limited Objective Experiment in Ghana and Ethiopia, under the umbrella of our Africa Endeavor effort, and security sector reform in Liberia make visible and measurable differences on the ground. The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), and its military component known as Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Trans-Sahara (OEF-TS), is an excellent example of preventative US interagency cooperation aimed at building regional counterterrorism capacity to enhance partner nation border security in Trans-Sahara Africa. USAFRICOM will continue to work closely with the State Department under the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. ACOTA has a well established record of success in training African militaries in vital peacekeeping missions.

There are also new U.S. initiatives such as the African Partnership Station (APS) that demonstrate the types of activities USAFRICOM will seek to promote as "forces for good." We have listened to African leaders' in the development of our Gulf of Guinea naval programs. APS establishes an at-sea training platform on board a single ship that provides persistent regional presence employing a minimal footprint ashore.

APS is currently deploying to the Gulf of Guinea region to improve maritime security and safety in West and Central Africa. Not only will it provide quality military training to sailors and leaders of the nations it

will visit, it will also carry members of NGOs such as Project HOPE, who will provide various medical services and education programs for many of those same nations. These NGOs will work in coordination with uniformed medical personnel. APS, like OEF-TS, is a critical tool to develop the critically important human relationships which serve as the basis of enduring, broader relationships between the US and our partners.

The stability and security we envision on the continent will unfold and mature as we build strong and lasting relationships with our African partners, allies and international organizations, both governmental and private. We will build these relationships using appropriate foreign military financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds for our African partners. IMET and FMF remain important tools for building capacity on the continent. IMET, in particular, remains an important program for military professionalization.

In summary, USAFRICOM represents the United States Government's long-term commitment to strengthen our security ties with Africa. The establishment of USAFRICOM also addresses America's growing interests in a very important part of the world. Strong bonds of friendship and a common vision for the future are critical to understanding the regional challenges and opportunities across the continent. We will endeavor to assist African nations in enhancing security and stability for the peoples of Africa, where growth and expanded horizons exist for future generations. We are sure to be successful as we move forward together as a team with a common vision, thus enhancing our security here in America.

Thank you.