

**Africa-US Trade and Economics Thought Leadership Series**

**Guidelines**

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

**Introduction**

The African Centre for the Study of the US (ACSUS) based at the University of the Witwatersrand was established in 2018 with the vision of intellectual leadership in engaging, shaping discourse and deepening the understanding in the Africa-US arena. The Centre implements this vision through the programs of teaching, research, public engagement, outreach and publication and multimedia. Three project clusters have been underway since inauguration; politics and diplomacy, media and culture, and economics and trade. To reinforce and sustain the economics and trade project cluster, ACSUS established the ACSUS Economics and Trade Research Group as part of the Economics and Trade cluster of projects in May 2021 to undertake research, publication and public engagement. These guidelines are intended for the first activity of the Research Group aimed at producing foundational knowledge on Africa-US economic and trade intersections. This will lay the ground for deeper analyses and serve as the talking points for a forthcoming virtual forum to be presented to policy and corporate stakeholders. This first edition in a series of other publications will be published as a special magazine issue and promoted to the target audience and the wider public.

**Africa-US Economics and Trade Relations**

Africa and the US have multiple relations across economic and trade sectors. The main activities revolve around policy-led initiatives such as the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA), Prosper Africa, and PEPFAR. US Government agencies – particularly the United States Agency for Trade and the United States Agency for Development – are some of the entities through which the US Government implements its economic and trade policies towards Africa. US embassies across the continent also play a pivotal role. American financial institutions such as the Export-Import (Exim) bank are active in Africa as well as the America’s shareholding in the African Development Bank. American businesses have dense relations with African directly or indirectly through business lobbies such as the American Chamber of Commerce and the Corporate Council on Africa. Similarly, public and private entities and Africa interface with their US counterparts.

While American policies have been critiqued in the past, cautious optimism has been entertained over the past couple of months on the back of the election of President Joe Biden as the 46th President of the US. Hope has been expressed about the possibility for improved economic and trade relations between the US and Africa. This shift coincides with the coming into effect of the African Continental Free Trade Area set up as a means of implementing the African Union’s Agenda 2063. Various African regional economic communities and individual countries also have their own economics and trade policies. Moreover, African countries have stepped up diaspora policies in recent times as remittances have risen to become crucial sources of foreign revenue.

**Thematic Focus**

Against the above background, the ACSUS Africa-US Economic and Trade project aims to publish foundational or framing articles aimed at providing perspectives on the direction Africa-US relations. The project seeks to uncover, among other issues, what has worked well in the Africa-US economics and trade sphere, opportunities and bottlenecks in Africa-US trade, and how to deepen these relations. Research Group members are at liberty to choose any sector of the economy for analysis.

**Key Questions**

What are the connections between Africa and the US at the policy and business-to-business levels? Are the links strong and seamless or are they weak or even broken? Are African countries gaining optimally from the relations or not? What can be done to enhance benefits for African countries?

**Objectives**

The objectives of the publication are:

* Generate thought pieces on Africa-US economics and trade thus serving as a springboard for deeper analysis and research in future.
* Address the question of linkages between Africa and the US at the policy and operational levels.
* Serve as the starting point towards reaching out to corporate and policy stakeholders.

**Target Audience**

The articles target a wide array of individuals, including but not limited to:

* Policymakers both in Africa and the United States.
* Corporate Leaders.
* Journalists and legal practitioners.
* Trade and finance professionals.
* Academics focusing on Africa-US trade and economics.

Note that the audience consists of people who may not be conversant with finance, economics, and trade terminology. When developing your articles, please bear the audience in mind.

**Gudelines For Writing The Articles**

* **Format**: The articles should be in Microsoft Word Format, Times New Roman ‘12 font.
* **Length**: The articles should reach a maximum of 2000 words, preliminary sections and citations.
* **Citation**: References should be endnotes in the APA citation style.
* **Hyperlinks**: For every citation, provide a hyperlink to the relevant source.
* **Language**: As noted above, the audience consists of people who may not be experts in trade and economics. Hence, use non-technical language as much as possible. Where technical language is inevitable, give a brief definition or description of the term. The meaning or explanation could be within the text or as a footnote/endnote.

**Editing**

John Karuitha and Bob Wekesa will edit this first series of articles. Subsequent series articles will be edited by other research group members as determined during periodic discussions. Besides other editorial processes, ACSUS will also provide proof reading services.

**Submission**

The deadline for article submission is July 22, 2021. Please submit the articles to ACSUS’ Communications Manager Nono Ndlovu: [nono.ndlovu@wits.ac.za](mailto:nono.ndlovu@wits.ac.za) and copy Prince Mudau: mudau1prince@gmail.com