

**African Centre for the Study of the United**

**States (ACSUS)**

**Strategic Plan 2021-2025**

**US-Africa Economic and Trade Project**

# Introduction

The centre was stablished with the main purpose of studying the United States and its relations with Africa, bilaterally and multilaterally. The relations range from the cultural and educational exchanges to political and diplomatic missions, with the latest being health diplomacy in the covid-19 era. Perhaps one of the most important of the relations include economics and trade as this has been vital for both the African leaders as well as the White House. In the past, initiatives such as the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) Prosper Africa, and PEPFAR were integral in giving Africa and its products access into the world’s leading economy – the United States. With the Biden-Harris administration in the White House and America’s return to multilateralism coinciding with the African Continental Free Trade Area coming into effect, US-Africa economic and trade project is pivotal to pinpoint the direction that US-Africa relations is going. The project may feature what has worked well and how these relations can be enhanced, opportunities that rise in lieu of the recent developments since the conclusion of the 2020 US elections.

**Why the US-Africa Economic and Trade Project?**

Trading in Africa heavily relies on centralisation on the authorities. This creates a trading environment that lacks flexibility and transparency which is vulnerable to malicious alteration and corruption. Too much paperwork involved in trading. This has precipitated failure by African countries to grab various trade opportunities that have been created by the U.S. If Africa is to trade better, it must improve the capacity of the ordinary businesspeople to trade within Africa and with the U.S. There is so much work done by global, multilateral, continental, regional, national bodies and somehow this does not increase the average citizen level knowledge of trading opportunity within Africa and with the U.S. There is an information and knowledge gap.

It is our belief that the ACUSUS has the necessary positionality to build an Africa-US Trade knowledge base. The consolidation and structuring of existing knowledge, the collation and dissemination of critical everyday trade indicators that starts to excite Africa towards the possibility of trading among themselves. A well-researched and curated knowledge basis on Africa Trade that supports academic and professional participation. Furthermore, ACUSUS commands a sizeable community of strategic partners to create fruitful public engagements on Africa-U. S issues. We further aim to establish consultancy on this area.

**Activities in 2020**

* Establish a working group that is made up of research affiliates.
* Fundraise for the project.
* Publish thought leadership articles with Africa portal and on our website.
* Host webinars and form partnerships with organisations looking at trade and economics.

**2021 and Beyond**

* Creating a project that will help a cooperative of women to export goods to the U.S.
* Publication of a special issue journal every year
* Host webinars as part of public engagement efforts.
* Holding a symposium every year
* Publication of thought pieces
* In 2024 publish a book