



MARCH 29, 2023

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador Larry André at the Somalia AGOA Application Ceremony

Mogadishu, Somalia

March 28, 2023

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Good afternoon, Honorable Minister and members of your team. It is a pleasure to meet with you again and discuss our shared goal of promoting Somalia's prosperity.

I had the pleasure to welcome the Minister to the U.S. Embassy earlier this year. As you might remember Minister, when you enter the Embassy, the photos on the wall tell the history of the close relationship between Somalia with the United States. In a future visit, Mr. Minister, you will notice that we've hung a new photograph of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamed's meeting with President Biden at the Africa Leaders Summit last December.

The submission of this AGOA application letter today follows directly from those meetings in Washington.

The Africa Leaders Summit recognized that Africa is a key geopolitical player, one that is shaping our present, and will shape our future.

The United States is committed to expanding and modernizing U.S. partnerships in Africa and Somalia: working together to find innovative solutions to new and long-standing challenges; harnessing new research and technologies; and investing in long-term sources of strength while meeting immediate needs.

In other words, we will focus on what we will do *with* Somalia and its people.

AGOA – the African Growth and Opportunity Act – has been at the core of U.S. economic policy and commercial engagement with Africa since its passage by the U.S. Congress in 2000. AGOA will provide Somalia with an opportunity to export its products to the U.S. with greatly reduced trade barriers.

To meet AGOA's rigorous eligibility requirements, Somalia will make additional progress toward establishing a market-based economy, the rule of law, political pluralism, and the right to due process.

Additionally, Somalia is expected to enact policies to reduce poverty, combat corruption, and protect human rights.

Good governance and accountability are essential for economic development. They create a stable and predictable environment for businesses to operate in. They help ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently.

The rule of law helps create a level playing field. Whether in business, politics, or civil society, everyone – including government officials and the most powerful business leaders – is subject to the rule of law. That law should be applied fairly and impartially.

With all of this in mind, the Embassy is honored to provide a link between the Federal Government of Somalia and the U.S. Trade Representative.

My colleagues and I wish Somalia all the best during the assessment process that will determine Somalia's eligibility to join AGOA.

It is our hope that Somalia will join the 36 African countries benefitting from AGOA. We look forward to seeing you prosper in this endeavor.

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