

## America's Strategic Interests in Africa

Ambassador Peter Chaveas

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**Ambassador Chaveas:** Thank you very much. I've got to start by saying wow! I've been at this subject for, in various ways, for about 40 years now and I can remember some times not so long ago where this subject would have attracted enough people to perhaps fill a large broom closet. [Laughter]. So it's very very gratifying to see such a significant audience out there.

I thank you for that kind introduction and more importantly, I thank the Air Force Association for giving me this opportunity. And most particularly, I thank your President, Lieutenant General Michael Dunn, for inviting me to play this role today at your conference and talk about a subject that's very near and dear to my heart, and that is the increasing significance of Africa to the strategic interests of the United States.

I had the great pleasure of knowing and working with Mike Dunn while he was the President of the National Defense University. I know him to be a great leader and a really fine American.

Given the nature of this audience I think it's probably essential that I start out by establishing my own Air Force credentials.

In 1965 I was a distinguished graduate of the ROTC Basic Air Science Course at Dennison University. Then in what almost all of you will recognize as a fatally flawed act of bad judgment, I decided to end my military career at that point. [Laughter].

Nonetheless, over the years I've had many many opportunities to observe the extraordinary work of the United States Air Force, both in Africa and elsewhere, and I owe a great deal to one particular Air Force officer, General Jim Jamerson, who as Deputy Commander in Chief of U.S. European Command recruited me as the political advisor to that command and thereby gave me the opportunity for four of the most interesting and challenging years I had during my entire career.

One other note about credentials before I get into the substance of my remarks, as I indicated before, I've spent most of the last 40 years dealing with U.S.-African relations, but I do not pretend to be an Africa expert. I

question whether any one can claim to be an expert about a continent that encompasses 53 countries; is large enough to equal the land mass of the continental United States, China, West and Central Europe, and Argentina, and still have two million square miles left over. It includes extraordinary ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, and geographic diversity.

I have never stepped foot in Sudan or Somalia, and have limited experience of North and Central Africa. I can claim a very significant first-hand knowledge of West and Southern Africa.

With that caveat in mind, let me start to generalize about all of Africa and its significance to our interests. [Laughter]. In the wake of the end of the Cold War, such attention as we had given to Africa diminished significantly. Many of our official resources were redeployed to address the challenges and opportunities of the dissolution of the Soviet Empire, and Africa became more and more associated in our minds with catastrophe, corruption, and seemingly irresolvable problems of underdevelopment. Our sense of humanity and generosity and some significant economic interests would not permit us to entirely disengage, and some developments such as the inauguration of Nelson Mandela, inspired us. But generally we saw engagement in Africa as being in the category of good to do if other priorities did not impinge, as they most often did.

I certainly don't have to tell this audience that on 9/11 the way in which we view the world changed in some very fundamental ways. On that horrible day a terrorist movement that had found refuge and a base of operation in a poor, isolated, under-developed corner of the world that we thought with the end of the Cold War was no longer of significant importance to us, reached out and did us great harm.

In today's globalized world we can no longer act as if conditions of bad governance, conflict and poverty elsewhere or anywhere are of relevance to our humanitarian sensibilities, but of margin interest to our strategic interests. Nowhere is this point more salient than on the continent of Africa.

What then are our strategic interests with respect to Africa?

First, in an ever more globalized economy we are increasingly dependent on African petroleum among other critical commodities. In June 2008 we imported more than

77.2 million barrels of petroleum from African countries, most of them in the Gulf of Guinea. That was close to six million barrels more than we imported from the entire Persian Gulf, and more than 19 percent of our total imports. Projections have that figure rising to 25 percent by 2015.

As the pump price for gas has spiraled upwards Americans who had given little thought to Africa in the past have come to know where the Niger Delta and Chad are, and some even know what MEND is. For those few of you who don't know what MEND is, it's the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta.

Sophisticated Africans may not buy the simplistic view that our intervention in Iraq was simply an effort to control oil, but they do recognize that if the world economy was not so dependent on petroleum from the Persian Gulf, our involvement over decades in that part of the world would have been very different.

Given tight world markets for many commodities that originate in Africa such as cooper, coltan and platinum, is it unreasonable for Africans to raise questions about how we might act if we perceived those interests threatened by Africans or outside influences, for instance China?

Our response is that Africans are sellers and we and others are buyers. And we have an interest in assuring that Africa can reliably participate in free, open world markets. That gives all of us an interest in Africa's stability and hence its economic, political and social development.

Good answer, but the African experience justifies considerable skepticism.

Second, much attention has been given to the threat of terrorism in or emanating from Africa. That a very real terrorism threat exists in at least some areas of the continent is self-evident. In 1998 two American embassies in Africa were devastated with considerable loss of life, mostly Africans. Over the past ten years other attacks linked to al-Qaida in Kenya, Somalia, Morocco and Algeria, as well as attacks in Europe involving Africans have received a great deal of attention from our media and from decisionmakers in this town and elsewhere in major capitals.

Let me talk juts very very briefly about the nature of the terrorism threat, or at least the international aspects

of the terrorism threat in Africa. I would generalize by putting that threat in three categories.

First of all, there is the phenomenon in Africa of ungoverned spaces. There are significant areas of the continent where what we would describe as governance is either non-existent or grossly inadequate. These are areas where conceivably international terrorist organizations might find refuge, might look for resources, might train, et cetera. Examples are areas like the Eastern Congo and much of the Gulf of Guinea.

There is also the phenomenon of African states which are somewhat more developed, have certain of the institutions of development, but are lacking some significant other important institutions. An example - South Africa has a relatively sophisticated banking and financial sector, hence money can be moved through South Africa. South Africa doesn't have the counterpart in terms of its ability to monitor those kinds of movements and pay attention to the possibility that they might be used by international criminals or terrorists.

Then there are some areas of the continent where we can clearly identify some linkages directly to al-Qaida. That would be the case on a very limited basis in Somalia. It would also be the case of al-Qaida in the Maghreb, operating in the Sahara and particularly in Algeria.

But even in looking at those problems, it's very important that we look at them in the context of local knowledge about the history and complexity of those societies.

For instance in the Maghreb, while there is clearly some kind of link to al-Qaida involving some elements operating in that area, we can't look at that problem and we can't address it effectively if we don't understand longstanding historical disputes amongst people in that part of the world. The acute artificiality of the colonial borders which have become the borders of independent states. It's not a clear-cut issue.

Putting aside those areas where international terrorism issues arise or may arise, much less attention has been paid to organizations in Africa whose reach has been more limited to the region and non-Western interests. While serving as the United States Ambassador in Sierra Leone from 2001 to 2004, I was asked some very difficult and uncomfortable questions about why the United States had seemingly been less concerned about terrorism when the perpetrators were the thugs of the Revolutionary United

Front and the victims were almost exclusively Sierra Leoneans. Similar questions might be posed elsewhere in Africa or beyond. Why are we so much more concerned about this phenomenon only when it has links to al-Qaida or Islam?

At the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, countering ideological support for terrorism is a central point in our dialogue with our African partners. All of those discussions take place on a basis of non-attribution, but for that very reason they offer some very valuable insights to the African perspective on this issue.

I'm particularly loathe to generalize on this issue. The African views that I have heard have run the gamut from being largely in agreement with our own official view to utter rejection of the premises and tactics of the global war on terror. But one point is quite pervasive. The Africans with whom we interact see few long-term prospects of successfully dealing with the threat of instability, be it generated by international terror networks or local dissidents, absent solutions to the grinding burden of poverty.

Let me more briefly mention two other reasons why we should recognize that our strategic interests are engaged in Africa.

First, Congress recently passed and the President signed landmark legislation extending for five years with significantly increased funding the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR. The new funding commitment over five years of \$48 billion will expand on an effort that has had a major impact on the HIV/AIDS tragedy in Africa and fund additional efforts to address malaria and tuberculosis. This long-term commitment is not just an act of humanity. It recognizes that the health crisis on the African continent has enormous implications for Africa's stability and for global public health. Disease and the collapse of local public health in Africa are not simply issues of local interest. In our interconnected world, disease that threatens one area can appear elsewhere in short order.

West Nile Virus is now well-known in Virginia. Bird Flu is well established in parts of Africa, but we have really very little understanding of exactly what that means in terms of its magnitude and limited ability to understand its potential to spread because the public health system in Africa is so weak.

Just this morning there are reports of a major new Bird Flu outbreak on the outskirts of the city of Lomei in Togo.

Parts of Africa offer excellent conditions for the incubation of new health threats that might spread before we recognize that they exist. Many of you will of course be aware of the horror of Ebola which has appeared in Central Africa over the last several years, and which has only failed to spread not because of aggressive public health efforts, but because it is so devastating to its victims that they never have the opportunity to move, and hence to spread it.

A second issue is global warming. Africa at the same time is one of the areas of the world that is and will be most adversely impacted by this threat; is least responsible for the phenomenon and least able to deal with its consequences. And on the other hand, controls some of the key resources that are central to any global response.

Many African societies already live on the edge, impacted by desertification or floods; seeking to practice subsistence agriculture or herding on marginal lands under intense population pressures; and relying in large part upon local natural resources for fuel, shelter and economic opportunity. Few African governments have even minimal resources - human or financial - to address these stresses.

Africa makes a negligible contribution to the buildup of greenhouse gases, but its dwindling forests, of which the Congo Basin is the second largest in the world, play a critical role in mitigating that buildup.

If these are legitimate reasons why we should view Africa as being of critical importance to our interests, what should we be doing about it?

First, we have to get beyond the stereotypes that present Africa as if it were one homogeneous, hopeless scene, characterized by bad governance, conflict and irresolvable poverty. That is the picture most frequently presented in our media, and it is not without validity. But recall what I said initially about the vastness and diversity of this continent. Bad governance is a pervasive issue, but at the same time whereas in 1973 only two countries in Africa were assessed as free and nine partially free by Freedom House; in 2007 ten were free and 23 partially free.

Conflict continues to plague Somalia, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But conflict has been

addressed in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Angola, and mitigated in Cote D'Ivoire and in Sudan, outside of Darfur. And despite ongoing difficulties, South Africa stands out as one of the most extraordinary transitions of recent history.

Religious conflicts in areas like Northern Nigeria have tended to upstage the reality that much if not most of African religious tradition - Islamic, Christian and otherwise - has more often been characterized by moderation and tolerance.

Poverty is a daunting challenge throughout the continent, but only one country, Zimbabwe, failed to experience positive economic growth in 2006, and all of sub-Saharan Africa experienced GDB growth of 6.8 percent last year.

Second, we must recognize and be prepared to listen to and work with African leadership. Africans and others have often talked about "African solutions for African problems". Granted, this has too often been more rhetoric than action. Rhetoric by Africans who mouth the words but continue to look to outsiders to solve their problems; and rhetoric by outsiders who thought they knew better than Africans, or were simply seeking cover for their own inaction.

But increasingly today we can see evidence that Africans recognize that absent African solutions in leadership, there will be no solutions. At best they can look to outsiders for back-up and support, which often is too little and too late.

This trend is particularly evident in efforts to resolve conflict and build peace and security architecture. Too little attention has been given to the role of Africans in resolving the long-festering conflict over the Cameroon-Nigeria border, at the Bakasi Peninsula, a conflict with major implications for petroleum production.

African leadership is mediating the conflicts in Northern Uganda and Burundi, while media attention emphasizes the wavering efforts of African in the international community to deal with the tragedy in Darfur and the failure to address the downward spiral of Zimbabwe, although of course there are developments reported just as of this morning. Africans at the level of the African Union and most notably in the context of the Economic Community of West African States, or ECOWAS, are making real progress in building their own capacity to prevent and address conflict situations.

African militaries play an increasingly important and professional role in peacekeeping in Africa and internationally.

As many of you are aware, the manner in which the United States is viewed around the world has suffered significantly over the last seven to eight years, but there is a noteworthy exception in Africa. What are we doing right?

Whatever one's views regarding the present administration and its policies elsewhere, it is very hard to dispute that it has given unprecedented attention and resources to Africa and African issues, precisely because there is a new perception with respect to our interests in Africa.

This focus has been marked by what has arguably been a better balance of our foreign policy tools than in other regions of the world. Our diplomacy has led efforts to support the resolution of conflicts and has done so in tandem with African and international efforts. Our assistance programs have been far better resourced and have been marked by innovation. I've already mentioned the PEPFAR program. The African Growth and Opportunity Act, the creation of the previous administration, was sustained and expanded. The Millennium Challenge Account was launched. And we have made measured use of our military tools and launched the most important reorganization of our military effort towards Africa ever, Africa Command.

This command got off to an admittedly rough start in terms of African and American perceptions. Our strategic communications left something to be desired. But I believe that hurdle is being overcome, and that command holds great promise as an effective tool among others for the pursuit of U.S. interests and for enhancing African capabilities.

The old structure by which Africa was the secondary or even lower interest of three commands assured inefficiency and lack of effective advocacy for African issues and relevant resources.

The command's focus on building African capacity and General Ward's description of AFRICOM as a "listening and learning command" indicates an understanding of the need to accept African leadership and its priorities.

I believe Air Force capabilities can contribute significantly to responding effectively to those African priorities. Air transport in and to and from Africa is a

growing factor in economic growth, yet Africa's share of global air traffic remains a very small portion of the world total. Despite that fact, it is responsible for a grossly disproportionate share of global air-related accidents, 12 percent of the global total in 2005.

U.S. expertise has much to offer in the area of air domain awareness and security on the continent.

I am relatively upbeat about African prospects, but even if I were not I would still argue strongly for engagement. Africa is a reality - good, bad or indifferent. What happens there has major implications for our future.

So I would end with a word of caution. Over the past several years we have given unprecedented attention to Africa and that is appreciated by most Africans. But we still have a reputation, even with our best African friends, for not listening and for being unreliable. Too many times in the past they have seen the United States launch new initiatives for Africa only to see them atrophy or disappear altogether a few years later.

The initiatives of recent year including Africa Command, and I would add, the sustained building of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, have helped to overcome this perception, but these are still early days. What we are doing four, five or ten years from now and how we are resourcing those efforts will tell the tale as to whether the U.S. and African interests are truly being served.

Thank you very much.

[Applause].

With that, I'd be most happy to try and respond to any questions or comments.

**Question:** Tom Owen, ACSC.

[Inaudible] AFRICOM [inaudible] positive [inaudible] these days, but we know there are some issues still with AFRICOM including the location of AFRICOM and how we can better improve its strategic communications. Can you outline some milestones for success for AFRICOM, to maybe say that we can come to the continent and be able to [inaudible] our interests and our [inaudible]?

**Voice:** Repeat the question, please.

**Question:** Outline some milestones for AFRICOM.

**Ambassador Chaveas:** Let me start by saying it was a major error on our part to start from the position that we wanted, and I underline "we" wanted to headquarter this command on the African continent. Once again, we forgot to ask the Africans.

I wouldn't begin to know all of the complexities of why that particular decision was made, but what I can tell you was that putting that issue right out front in the beginning, in the current global context - Africans are not just thinking about their own world, they know what's going on elsewhere in the world - was perceived as very threatening. There were a few exceptions along the way amongst Africans, but generally speaking that was seen as threatening. Just deciding to put it on the continent without adequate consultations was threatening enough, but also we didn't make it clear or clear enough from the very beginning that we really did have a new kind of command in mind here going forward.

Their image, of course, they related to EUCOM for the most part, and what do we have in Europe or what have we had in Europe? Big bases, lots of troops, so on and so forth. So immediately that's their image of what we're all about.

We also did not convey a clear message of what the mission of this new effort was. Over time we've backed away from the issue of presence. General Ward has been quite clear his headquarters is in Stuttgart. I'm quite aware that there are internal discussions about other alternatives, but all of those alternatives are outside of Africa. So the effort now is not at all focused on placing a headquarters or other significant presence on the continent, other than the significant presence that exists in Djibouti with CJTF HOA and there's every intent of sustaining that as an asset for the new command.

There are two levels of what we're hearing from Africans. Most of what we have heard from Africans with the exception of the President of Liberia, is that they are at best neutral about this and some of them are very outspokenly negative. But I think if you watch what's happened over time, those voices have gotten quieter and quieter, and I think certainly from the interaction that we regularly have with Africans, that others have with Africans, they do want to engage with the United States in military and defense issues, and they are now coming to understand that what AFRICOM is really about, basically, is just a reorganization of our own internal bureaucracy, and

in doing so in a way that is going to serve their interests and ours much more effectively.

The three command arrangement that we worked with has been inefficient. Very inefficient. But even more importantly, it has meant there was no four star commander anywhere who had Africa as first priority. That is going to be very important as that officer, and General Ward has already taken on this role, makes it clear that he's someone who focuses all of his attention on Africa, on African issues, and on U.S. interests in Africa and that, oh by the way, he's an advocate for the resources that are necessary to do that.

How do we measure that this is successful going forward?

I attended a conference earlier this year out at [Aerli] House where there were a wide array of African representatives, people who knew their counterparts in the United States pretty well. There was a very frank conversation, and obviously it was on a non-attribution basis, so I'm not going to get deeply into it. But one point that was made to me and to many of my colleagues that I think was fundamental, and that was that many of our African friends were saying get on with it. Do it. Do what you're going to do. Do it in a spirit of listening to our priorities. Do things that are going to help us build our capabilities. And over time we'll see what you're doing. Over time we will see what the real intent of this command is, what its real purpose is. Then we will make further judgments on whether it's value added or not.

I think we need some time. Our African partners need some time. An awful lot of the discussion has been at a higher volume than is desirable. Time will tell on how this thing is working out.

**Question:** What do you see as the future of South Africa? What's their future path? Will they step up and take a leadership role in southern Africa, or will they take Zimbabwe as an example and elect more and more radical leaders an [inaudible]?

**Ambassador Chaveas:** The question is what role do I see for South Africa in leadership and leadership particularly in southern Africa, or does Zimbabwe tell us more about where things are going.

I think South Africa has already demonstrably taken on a leadership role, both in the sub-region, on the continent, and internationally. It is running into some

significant problems in terms that its leadership aspirations are outrunning its resources, and that's particularly evident with respect to its military, where its political leadership, recognizing that they have a fairly significant military capability compared to other players on the African continent, have a wonderful tendency to go into various situations and immediately make commitments on behalf of a military that, as good as it may be, is in some decline for a variety of reasons and is under great stress.

With respect to the Zimbabwe issue, obviously we certainly perceive that the South Africans have failed to show the kind of leadership that was needed to address that particular problem. There's a very complex history here of relationships that developed, debts that were developed during the freedom struggle in South Africa and in southern Africa. There's also a strong perception that outsiders, meaning the UK and ourselves, are driving the Zimbabwe issue for our own interests and not really for the interests of the sub-region.

We of course yesterday had an agreement signed and it is an agreement that has been brokered by President Umbeke of South Africa. He led that effort. Now I think there is abundant reason to be skeptical about the future prospects of that agreement, but it is the only agreement in town. It was brokered by the South Africans. We should wait a while before we render a judgment on whether or not it represents leadership.

I could go on at much longer length. The South Africans are playing a very significant economic leadership role beyond their own borders. But on the other hand, this is a society marked by extraordinary inequality, even by African standards. One that comes with all the baggage of the racial system that was in place for decades in that country and trying to work through those issues.

I think the bottom line on South Africa, as I indicated in my prepared statement, is that this is one of the most extraordinary transitions of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. If you go back to the 1980s, you could not have found any serious analyst of South Africa who would have told you that today South Africa would be where it was without enormous bloodletting and all kinds of other damage to its society.

**Question:** Ambassador, a quick, easy question. [Inaudible] to the population of Africa to the [inaudible]? My second question would simply be, where do you see the relationship between America's commitment to Africa and

somebody like China in terms of capital infusion, military alliances? Obviously I think they've taken a bigger role, but I'll leave that to you.

**Ambassador Chaveas:** I'm not sure what that total population figure is. It's somewhere in the 800 million to a billion level.

The Chinese are in Africa first and foremost for resources, and almost as importantly for the value that comes from good relations with Africa in terms of the international environment.

The Chinese attach a lot more importance than we do to the United Nations, for instance. If you've got most of the African votes you've got a lot of votes in that particular forum, and in other international fora as well.

The Chinese have been particularly interested in Africa because some of the last holdouts in the world with respect to relations with Taiwan are on the African continent. There are still a handful of them, and they've been slowly but surely picking those away. That is obviously a critical issue to the Chinese.

What's in it for the Africans? Well, there is a lot of unhappiness in Africa in general. Again, I'm generalizing about this terribly complex continent. But there's a lot of unhappiness in Africa about the strings that they see attached to Western involvement. They are grateful in many many cases for various kinds of assistance that have been provided, either currently or in the past. As I indicated, they certainly recognize that this administration has ratcheted up the level of resources very significantly. That's widely understood. But we are quite demanding, as is the case with other Western donors, about how that money will be used, how you will behave, and so on and so on and so on. And not only is that in and of itself a great annoyance to many Africans, but it comes in the context of a history of colonialism. Africans are damned tired of outsiders telling them what to do with their stuff and their countries and their people.

A significant difference with the Chinese is the Chinese come in and say basically, the only real condition we've got is that you don't deal with Taiwan. Otherwise, we are prepared to put resources in with few or any strings attached to it. And we will deal with you as a sovereign government, irrespective of what Human Rights Watch says about you or Freedom House or so on and so forth.

Now over time, Chinese and Africans are both coming to understand that that's a little more complex than it seems. There's a lot of resentment in many parts of Africa because when the Chinese come in to do some kind of assistance project or industrial investment or whatever, they come in en masse. They don't transfer skills, they don't employ Africans, and they have little regard for local culture. So those are negatives as far as Africans see.

It's a complex relationship, but at the bottom line I would say many Africans like having an alternative. That doesn't mean they don't want engagement with us and the West, it just means they like choices, like most of us do.

**Question:** With [inaudible] in mind, how much does the U.S. military [inaudible]? And how much should they get involved with IGOs and NGOs in the distribution of humanitarian aid, for example?

**Ambassador Chaveas:** I believe that the principal focus of what AFRICOM should use its capabilities for in Africa is to build counterpart resources. Africans, with exceptions, are trying to build more professional militaries, and they're succeeding in some significant cases. They are also recognizing that most of them have limited capabilities as individual countries to address some of the security issues on their continent. They are more and more looking towards regional and most particularly sub-regional organizations to become the frameworks for those efforts. I mentioned ECOWAS particularly. The Western Africans are well ahead of others in terms of building an effective peace and security architecture.

I think AFRICOM can bring some real capabilities to apply to that. They in fact already are. There was an excellent exercise conducted in Nigeria just within the last month or two, Africa Endeavor, which in fact has its roots in a NATO exercise led by EUCOM called Combined Endeavor going back ten years or more. That's the kind of thing where we can bring real value added through Africa Command.

On the issue of NGOs and IGOs, first of all we've got to bear in mind that when we get involved in situations where those kinds of institutions tend to be involved, in humanitarian response or in development activities, our military does not have the lead on those issues, nor should it. AID, State Department, others are the ones that ought to be taking the lead with respect to dealing with those kinds of organizations. But there are military

capabilities that are relevant in support. I've seen it personally in some significant situations.

I remember extremely well the outstanding work that was done by 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force in Mozambique an Eastern South Africa back in the late '90s. But if we're going to do that work, it doesn't matter whether it's being led by AID or there's a big military involvement in it, we've got to recognize that those NGOs are major players in those kind of activities. In many cases they are the lead capability. More capable in some cases than counterpart institutions within our own government.

An example of that, when I first went to Sierra Leone in 2001, the war was still going on. I visited areas in the east which were the last part of the country to be pacified. [Mitsant San Frontierre], Doctors without Borders, were the only medical facilities in that whole region of Sierra Leone. There was nobody else willing and able to go into that kind of environment. And if we don't understand that and we don't understand the culture of these organizations and figure out how to work with them, we're missing a very important bet. It's fundamental to working in Africa.

**Question:** John Gray, National War College.

Let me throw out a word for you, and you're going to give us the background, the links, the solutions, and the legalities. [Laughter]. That word is piracy. I see a lot of naval uniforms and [inaudible] address piracy. Talk about piracy [inaudible].

**Ambassador Chaveas:** That is a particularly tough one. Again, I'm going to try and respect non-attribution here. But about three years ago my predecessor, General Carl Fulford, had a conversation with the head of one of the major sub-regional organizations on the continent, and he asked this individual, amongst other things, what do you think about and what's your organization doing with respect to the issue of maritime safety and security in blank? And the answer was, and this is a near complete quote. That is an issue I really ought to think about, but I don't. [Laughter]. Which was a reflection, first of all, of capabilities; and secondly, on the myriad of other things that was on that gentleman's agenda.

More recently we conducted a major seminar with that same organization. The same leader was the keynote speaker at that event. Maritime safety and security in that part of the world was a major feature of what he had to say. And even though we hadn't particularly inscribed it on the

agenda, it was a major piece of the discussion amongst all of the parties that were involved there.

I don't want to take entire credit for that evolution, but one of the key events in between those two was that in December of 2006, November of 2006, we in partnership with NAVEUR conducted a major senior level seminar focused exactly on that issue in that area. Clearly, that issue had been spread as a matter of concern to a lot of other people who needed to be engaged.

This is going to be a long, hard slog. There still is a tremendous lack of awareness of the issue in many parts of the continent. Even worse, as the awareness develops there is next to nothing in the way of resources to address it. African militaries are land centric. They've developed that way for a variety of local reasons. Navies are almost, effective navies are almost non-existent. One manifestation of that is the capability to operate in the areas where piracy is a problem. But probably even more important is that navies, because of that, have absolutely no clout within their governments. So their ability to raise these issues with their governments is very limited.

I think we have a lot to contribute in the way of raising the awareness. You're not going to get the resources, you're not going to get the effective response until there is an awareness.

One of the outcomes, or one of the follow-ons, if you will, to that conference that we organized with NAVEUR was something called the Africa Partnership Station which has a continuing, near continuing U.S. Navy presence in that part of the world today. A lot of interaction with a very diverse community of people that need to be aware of the issues. Because it's not just piracy. It's about environmental damage from attacks on oil pipelines. It's about, most dramatically probably for Africans, a dramatic depletion of their fisheries resources. There's a whole array of issues out there that a lot more people have to be engaged on.

So first of all you've got to make people aware of the problem. I think we're making some progress there. But it's going to be a long slog.

Any more? I'm getting a time signal.

Thank you very much for your attention. It's good to have you here.

[Applause].

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