

The Trump Administration's New Africa Strategy

- **Whitehouse:** Remarks by National Security Advisor Ambassador John R. Bolton
- **GlobalSecurity:** National Security Advisor Unveils Administration's Africa Strategy
- **WASHINGTON** – National Security Advisor John Bolton today unveiled the Trump administration's Africa strategy designed to counter Chinese influence on the continent and push African nations to show some results from the aid they receive from the United States. "We have prioritized working on this document because we understand that lasting stability, prosperity, independence and security on the African continent are in the national security interests of the United States," Bolton said at the Heritage Foundation here. Every decision made and policy announced on Africa will be guided by the strategy, the national security advisor said. The strategy lasers in on three core U.S. interests: advancing commerce with nations in the region, countering the threat of violent extremism, and ensuring that U.S. aid to Africa is efficient and effective.

Safeguarding economic opportunities on the continent has a national security aspect because of the increasing economic influence of China and Russia. "[China and Russia] are deliberately and aggressively targeting their investments in the region to gain a competitive advantage over the United States," Bolton said.

He noted that China's direct investment in Africa has totaled \$6.4 billion, Bolton said. "Over the past several years, China has devoted considerable state-

directed and state-supported financing to projects in the region," he added.

China's Investments Riddled With Corruption

"China uses bribes, opaque agreements and the strategic use of debt to hold states in Africa captive to Beijing's wishes and demands," he said. "Its investment ventures are riddled with corruption and do not meet the same ethical or environmental standards as U.S. developmental programs."

Bolton said the "predatory actions" are part of larger Chinese efforts, including the Belt and Road strategy, a series of infrastructure and development projects that seeks to advance Chinese global dominance and put in place a Chinese international order.

Examples in Africa abound. Zambia is up to \$10 billion in debt to China. "China is now poised to take over Zambia's national power utility company to collect on its debt," Bolton said. Djibouti also is in debt to China, which has established a military base just miles from the U.S. presence in Camp Lemonier. Chinese personnel have used lasers to try and blind American pilots landing in Djibouti.

Russia also trying to increase its influence on the continent through corrupt dealings, Bolton said. "It continues to sell arms and energy in exchange for votes at the United Nations – votes that keep strong men in power, undermine peace and security and run counter to the best interests of the African people," he said.

These Russian and Chinese moves serve to stunt economic growth in Africa and threaten financial independence of African nations and interfere with U.S. military operations, Bolton said.

Times are desperate in many nations of the continent, and that has fueled the rise of extremist philosophies and groups. Al-Qaida, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, al-Shabab and many others, he said, "have increased the lethality of their attacks, expanded into new areas and repeatedly targeted U.S. citizens and interests."