

Opening Remarks of Mr. Fred O. Oladeinde, President the Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA), on September 18, 2009 at the 12th US-Africa Trade and investment conference AfrICANDO 2009 on Smart and Appropriate Technologies for Rural Communities, Miami Beach Resort, Miami Beach, Florida.

Your Excellency President Bingu wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi, Honorable Vicki Huddleston, our Key note speaker, Honorable Ministers, Honorable Mayor Lynda Bell, Honorable Dennis Moss, Chair Miami Dade County Board of Commissioners, Honorable members of the Miami Dade County Board of Commissioners, Members of the Diplomatic Corp, Chairman Sunny Wright, Members of the Press, friends and colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen, On behalf of my board of directors, members, sponsors and co sponsors, I welcome you to the our 12th US-Africa Trade and Investment Conference, AfrICANDO 2009 on Smart and appropriate technologies for rural communities;

Since the last AfrICANDO, so much has changed in our world, to reinforce our faith in Democracy as the best hope for mankind. The election of the first black President of the United States; President Barack Obama, forever debunks the “supremacy theory” that for hundreds of years put a strong cloud over the sanctity of American Democracy. I hope, this reinforcement will serve as encouragement to billions of minorities and disadvantaged, in evolving democracies across the globe that; Yes democracy is the last hope for mankind.

It is also clear that future demand for energy will increase in most developing countries across the globe, particularly in Africa as a result of development desires to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's); the need to expand industrial capacity, and to add value to primary products before shipping goods to markets to create wealth, employment for our youths and prosperity is clear. The demand is even more in rural communities across the globe where over three billion people survive today on less than one dollar a day from subsistence agriculture because of lack of access to smart, appropriate and resource efficient technologies.

Efficient Agriculture sector is central to food security, and employment particularly for our youth. By empowering our farmers with smart appropriate technologies to increase yield, by providing easy access to financial and banking services, education, basic health care and other social needs to our rural communities we can turn the corridors between farms and markets to havens for economic activities and prosperity and expand economic opportunities to the over seventy percent of our citizens that now languish in poverty .

In Recent times, capitalism the most effective and efficient system of economic governance has come under strong assault, even some long time advocates of free markets, under pressure today are expressing fear and doubt, because of the recent economic downturn, caused by greed and corruption of “capitalist” across the globe. However capitalism 101 teaches us that real capitalist will never kill the goose that lay the golden egg.

The task before those who believe in the ingenuity of the individual and freedom of markets, is to expand economic freedom across the globe, particularly in rural communities, where billions of people are “enslaved” and denied freedom by crony capitalist. We need to empower individuals, particularly our youth; teach people how to fish, instead of giving them crumbs from our tables, empower people to create wealth and prosperity and reinforce their faith in the freedom of markets.

This conference is organized by The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA). The FDA, is a non profit non governmental organization founded in 1994; committed to promoting democracy, sustainable development, and economic growth throughout Africa. FDA work to connect the African Diaspora with their home countries. Our organization works to integrate emerging African democracies into the mainstream of global economy as a means to cultivate the pathway for peace and prosperity in Africa, and was created by members of the African Diaspora. .

We are honored and delighted to have Ambassador Vicki Huddleston, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, to give the Key Note address, she is a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa and a four time Chief of United States Missions in Latin America and Africa. Prior to joining the Department of Defense she was a Visiting Scholar at Brookings Institution

The President of the Republic of Malawi, H.E. Ngwazi Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika is the recipient of the 2009 Medal of Glory Award, our highest honor presented only to select leaders, for contributions to the promotion of the enduring democratic principles of liberty, freedom, and development in Africa. Dr Bingu wa Mutharika is credited for the bold reforms that resulted in the Malawi green revolution and the increased economic growth rate of Malawi from less than one percent in 2003 before he took office to 9.78 percent in 2008, at the end of his first term in office.

Prior to being elected President, Bingu wa Mutharika served as Malawi Minister of Economic Planning and Development (2003-2004), Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of Malawi (2001-2003), Secretary General Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) (1991-1997).

We thank H.E. Ngwazi Dr Bingu wa Matherika, for honoring us with his presence. We look forward to learning more from him about the success of the Malawi green revolution.

We look forward to your contributions and participation in the course of this important conference to its recommendations.

Again I thank all our sponsors and supporters and you in particular for your presence here with us to celebrate our 12th US-Africa trade and Investment conference AfrICANDO 2009.