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**REPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE**  
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**STATEMENT OF H.E MRS. DEDE EKOUE, MINISTER,  
ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT OF TOGO**

**PRESENTING**

**A SUMMARY OF THE TOGOLESE GOVERNMENT'S REPORT  
TO THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION  
RELATING TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE THEME:  
U.S –SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT:  
NEW DEVELOPPEMENTS**

Lomé, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

**Honorable Chairman**  
**Distinguished Commissioners**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. I am honored and delighted to present the contribution of the Government of Togo in line with the investigation on the theme “U.S-Sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Investments: recent developments”. With me today is HE. Frédéric Hegbe, Ambassador of Togo to the United States.
2. Togo is honored to be invited for this major consultation by the United States International Trade Commission. This consultation is well timed, less than six months after the 16<sup>th</sup> U.S- Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum (commonly known as AGOA Forum) co-hosted by the U.S and Togolese governments from August 8 to 10, 2017 in Lomé, Togo under the theme: “The U.S. and Africa: Partnering for Prosperity Through Trade”. The recommendations are included in the 16<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum Summary report attached to the submission.
3. This hearing offers us the opportunity to share a few key proposals to gain better leverage on the 16<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum recommendations with a view to enhancing trade between the United States and Africa, using Togo as a case study. Moreover, this consultation allows us to share a few thoughts on enhancing trade and investment between Togo and the USA in a win-win approach for both parties.

4. The submission of Togo covers six key points:
  - a. Togo's economic profile;
  - b. Overview of Togo's position in regional and global trade;
  - c. U.S-Togo trade facts;
  - d. Togo's support to sub-regional and regional economic integration;
  - e. Evolution of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in Togo;
  - f. Outlooks for enhancing economic and trade ties between Togo and the U.S and between the U.S and Africa.

**Honorable Chairman**

**Distinguished Commissioners**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

5. The vision of Togo for Trade and Investment between US and Sub-Saharan Africa is grounded in the search for shared prosperity for US and Africa. We need to pursue this vision by seizing the opportunity of a positive economic outlook for Africa for 2018 and 2019. The experience of Togo with an American company ALAFFIA co-founded by a member of Togolese diaspora shows clearly that it is possible to pursue trade and investment between Africa and the U.S. in a way that can be mutually beneficial to both parties. ALAFFIA Company is based in Washington State, U.S where it operates a production plant for the distribution of cosmetics in the U.S and European countries. This company managed to get into a partnership with Whole Food Markets. It employs 240 workers in the US and 700 in Togo. It has an

impact on over 10,000 households in both countries through indirect employment.

6. I would like to share with you a few quick facts about Togo. With a population of 7 million, Togo has recorded a sustained growth rate of 4.3 % between 2007 and 2015. This growth was due to an improvement of agricultural productivity, the boosting of phosphate production – fifth world biggest phosphate producer- and public investments particularly in a world class port and airport infrastructure. Togo has been working also to improve its business environment and according to the Doing Business 2017 Report, Togo is among the most performing reformers on business creation since 2011.
  
7. Togo is an important trade hub in West Africa. Togo has been investing significantly in transportation infrastructure and logistics to support its traditional role of Central Gateway of West Africa. With its deep sea port, its road networks connecting several landlocked countries to the port, a modern airport, and a private regional airline company ASKY, its financial hub with a regional Panafrikan Bank ECOBANK and several banks head offices, Togo is a key actor for trade facilitation within the African region, and between Africa and other continents. In addition, re-exports constitute almost 30% of average total exports over the period 2008-2016, demonstrating the active role Togo plays in connecting the region to other continents.

8. At the continental level, particularly at the African Union, the country plays a very active role and it is actively engaged with other African countries to help put in place the continental free trade agreement.
9. As for sub-regional integration, Togo is one of the founding members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Head of State of Togo, H.E Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé currently chairs the conference of Heads of State and government of the ECOWAS. A cornerstone of his agenda is to remove barriers to the free movement of people and goods and to abolish non-tariff barriers and implementing ECOWAS' Common External Tariff (CET). A specific report on regional integration will be shared by the Government of Togo through its embassy.
10. Trade between Togo and the United States is limited and has been declining during the last three years even though *United States (4.2%) is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest exporter of goods to Togo.*
11. Exports to US are around 10 million dollars but very little of these exports were done under AGOA because of several challenges. To address this situation, the government of Togo put in place an action plan for the utilization of AGOA.
12. With regards to FDI, the government of Togo initiated a vast program with a view of improving the business environment. This makes it possible for the country to be ranked as one of the top ten (10) reformers in the world. These efforts have attracted foreign direct investment. FDI from the U.S were channeled to the energy sector

through Contour Global Togo SA, an affiliate of the American Group Contour Global LP with the support of Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). FDI flows Togo received from the USA over the period 2011-2016 averaged approximately US \$ 15 million dollars a year.

13. Togo hosting the 16<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum with the U.S, helped increase the dynamism of the trade partnership between Togo and the U.S with the adoption of Togo's AGOA textile Visa and the adoption of an operational plan for a short and mid-term AGOA utilization. The government adopted a series of actions to be undertaken with a view to implementing, at the national level, the recommendations of African trade ministers at the conclusion of the Forum as well as Togo's AGOA utilization action plan.
14. This AGOA utilization operational plan focuses on five (05) strategic priorities. They include: (i) promotion of AGOA; (ii) development of facilitation tools to access the U.S. market; (iii) the promotion of the compliance to the certification with a proposed targeted action of setting up a certification laboratory in cooperation of U.S. agencies; (iv) capacity building and (v) investment promotion.

A copy of Togo's AGOA utilization plan is submitted with our report.

15. Going forward, Togo is committed to undertaking the following major initiatives, resource provided, to boost its productivity and its trade as well as to strengthen its capacity of trade hub.

- a. Enhance the capacity of its ports and modernize its mineral port;
- b. Invest in an energy thermal plant to increase the productivity of the economy;
- c. Develop off-grid networks with essentially private investment and renewable energy;
- d. Build at least 10 agropoles in 5 years across the country; these agropoles will serve as a basis for agro-industry development;
- e. Establish an industrial park in partnership with the private sector and foreign investors;
- f. Put in place a venture capital funds for SMEs/SMIs;

All these initiatives are further explained in the document attached to the report entitled: TOGO Central Gateway to West Africa.

16. Togo is also highly committed to continuing the necessary reforms to enhance the attractiveness of its business environment and attract more foreign investment including from its diaspora. The focus areas for such reforms include the strengthening of the telecommunication sector, land reforms, and the operationalization of the investment promotion agency.
17. Togo is therefore calling on the US government, US agencies and businesses to support its transformational investment projects in order to help boost trade and create shared opportunities to enhance prosperity. To this aim, Togo is highly committed to building strong

partnerships with the US Administration, US agencies such as MCC, USAID and OPIC to help prepare the ground for an increase of American investments in Togo.

18. In addition, in line with the recommendations of the 16<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum, the government of Togo calls on U.S. government to increase the technical and commercial assistance offered by USAID to eligible African countries and particularly to their businesses, to scale up cooperation and investments to help integrate the continent's businesses in the global value chains and supply networks, and to support the regional integration program. A special attention should be given to transport and energy as their high costs are among the most critical challenges to expanding regional integration and ensuring the competitiveness of African exports on the global market. 30 to 40% of exports costs are linked to transport and logistics.

19. The Togolese government expresses, once more, its deep gratitude to the United States International Trade Commission for this opportunity to share its views on enhancing trade and investment with greater benefits for Africa and the U.S. through AGOA and beyond.

I thank you all for your kind attention.