

**SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY HAIDARA MAMADOU,
CHIEF OF COTE D'IVOIRE EMBASSY TO THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA**

5th AGOA CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE

April 10, 2019

- **Mr. Fred Oladeinde, President of the Secretariat of AGOA CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS NETWORK;**
- **Honorable Minister of Planning and Development of Côte d'Ivoire,**
- **Excellences Ambassadors,**
- **Distinguished representatives of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Development of SMEs,**
- **Distinguished representatives of Embassies,**
- **Dear members of the Ivorian AGOA National Committee,**
- **Honorable participants,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am very much honored to welcome you this morning to the Chancery of Côte d'Ivoire on the occasion of the 5th Annual Spring Meeting organized by AGOA Civil Society Organizations Network on AGOA: Advancing Mutual Prosperity Through Trade and Economic Cooperation”.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first to acknowledge the presence of members of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire at this event.

The presence of these prominent representatives of the Government is a clear evidence of how much the Ivorian Leaders value the actions of the AGOA Civil Society Organizations Network.

It is as well a manifest proof of their willingness to support the network's endeavor to help African AGOA Eligible Countries leverage this commercial preference regime.

I would like to salute Excellencies Ambassadors and all representatives of AGOA beneficiary countries' Diplomatic Missions who have accepted to participate in this Spring Conference, in spite of their busy schedule.

We all know the costs of preparing the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund, in terms of time and efforts.

Thank you so much for your distinguished presence that lends a particular significance to this Conference.

It is also a great privilege to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Fred Oladeinde, President of the AGOA Civil Society Organizations Network, to Mrs. Jeannine B. Scott, AGOA Civil Society Advisory Board Member, and to all staff members of the Network's Secretariat for choosing the Chancery of Côte d'Ivoire to host this highly important event.

As we know, AGOA Civil Society Organizations Network is an organization focusing on increasing the volume and quality of African exports and on educating both African and United States stakeholders on this trade policy and its advantages.

That's why I wish to express my appreciation for the tireless pursuit of this noble purpose and for the ever-increasing part this Network is playing, since its inception, in the AGOA implementation process.

It is certainly in line with that purpose, that the AGOA Civil Society Organizations Network has decided to organize this 5th Spring Conference on "AGOA: Advancing Mutual Prosperity Through Trade and Economic

Cooperation” in preparation for the 18th AGOA Forum anticipated for August 2019 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire.

Therefore, as a platform for exchanges, discussion and proposals, this Spring Conference is expected to take stock of the progress made to date in implementing AGOA commercial preference, to shed light on hindrances and challenges and propose way forward toward optimal AGOA utilization.

The Conference should also ponder over ways and means to set up a pragmatic monitoring mechanism involving local civil society entities to ensure a suitable follow-up on AGOA utilization in AGOA beneficiary countries.

By looking closer at the proposed agenda, I am confident that there are good grounds for hope that many questions, during this conference, will find accurate and appropriate answers.

It is on this note that I would like to close my remarks, by wishing you every success in the work of this Conference.

Thank you for your kind attention.