

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 965

AN ACT

To establish a comprehensive United States Government initiative to build the capacity of young leaders and entrepreneurs in Africa, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Young African Leaders
3 Initiative Act of 2021” or “YALI Act of 2021”.

4 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the Young African Leaders Initiative,
7 launched in 2010, is a signature effort to invest in
8 the next generation of African leaders;

9 (2) Africa is a continent of strategic importance
10 and it is vital for the United States to support
11 strong and enduring partnerships with the next gen-
12 eration of African leaders; and

13 (3) the United States Government should
14 prioritize investments to build the capacity of emerg-
15 ing young African leaders in sub-Saharan Africa, in-
16 cluding through efforts to enhance leadership skills,
17 encourage entrepreneurship, strengthen public ad-
18 ministration and the role of civil society, and connect
19 young African leaders continentally and globally
20 across the private, civic, and public sectors.

21 **SEC. 3. YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE PROGRAM.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the De-
23 partment of State the Young African Leaders Initiative
24 (“YALI”) program.

25 (b) PURPOSE.—The YALI program shall seek to
26 build the capacity of young African leaders in sub-Saharan

1 Africa in the areas of business, civic engagement, or public
2 administration, including through efforts to—

3 (1) support young African leaders by offering
4 professional development, training, and networking
5 opportunities, particularly in the areas of leadership,
6 innovation, civic engagement, elections, human
7 rights, entrepreneurship, good governance, and pub-
8 lic administration; and

9 (2) provide increased economic and technical
10 assistance to young African leaders to promote eco-
11 nomic growth and strengthen ties between United
12 States and African businesses.

13 (c) FELLOWSHIPS.—The YALI program shall award
14 fellowships under the Mandela Washington Fellowship for
15 Young African Leaders program to young African leaders
16 ages 18 to 35 who have demonstrated strong capabilities
17 in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service, and leader-
18 ship, and who have had a positive impact in their commu-
19 nities, organizations, or institutions.

20 (d) REGIONAL LEADERSHIP CENTERS.—The YALI
21 program shall seek to establish regional leadership centers
22 in sub-Saharan Africa to offer training to young African
23 leaders ages 18 to 35 who have demonstrated strong capa-
24 bilities in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service and

1 leadership, and who have had a positive impact in their
2 communities, organizations, or institutions.

3 (e) ACTIVITIES.—

4 (1) UNITED STATES-BASED ACTIVITIES.—The
5 Secretary of State, in coordination with the Admin-
6 istrator for the United States Agency for Inter-
7 national Development and the heads of other rel-
8 evant Federal departments and agencies, shall over-
9 see all United States-based activities carried out
10 under the YALI program, including the following:

11 (A) The participation of Mandela Wash-
12 ington fellows in a six-week Leadership Insti-
13 tute at a United States university or college in
14 business, civic engagement, or public manage-
15 ment, including academic sessions, site visits,
16 professional networking opportunities, leader-
17 ship training, community service, and organized
18 cultural activities.

19 (B) The participation by Mandela Wash-
20 ington fellows in an annual Mandela Wash-
21 ington Fellowship Summit, to provide such Fel-
22 lows the opportunity to meet with United States
23 leaders from the private, public, and non-profit
24 sectors.

1 (2) AFRICA-BASED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary
2 of State, in coordination with the Administrator for
3 the United States Agency for International Develop-
4 ment and the heads of other relevant Federal de-
5 partments and agencies, should continue to support
6 YALI programs in sub-Saharan Africa, including the
7 following:

8 (A) Access to continued leadership training
9 and other professional development opportuni-
10 ties for Mandela Washington Fellowship for
11 Young African Leaders alumni upon their re-
12 turn to their home countries, including online
13 courses, technical assistance, and access to
14 funding.

15 (B) Training for young African leaders at
16 regional leadership centers established in ac-
17 cordance with subsection (d), and through on-
18 line and in-person courses offered by such cen-
19 ters.

20 (C) Opportunities for networking and en-
21 gagement with—

22 (i) other alumni of the Mandela
23 Washington Fellowship for Young African
24 Leaders;

1 (ii) alumni of programs at regional
2 leadership centers established in accord-
3 ance with subsection (d); and

4 (iii) United States and like-minded
5 diplomatic missions, business leaders, and
6 others as appropriate.

7 (3) IMPLEMENTATION.—To carry out this sub-
8 section, the Secretary of State, in coordination with
9 the Administrator of the United States Agency for
10 International Development and the heads of other
11 relevant Federal departments and agencies shall
12 seek to partner with the private sector to pursue
13 public-private partnerships, leverage private sector
14 expertise, expand networking opportunities, and
15 identify funding opportunities as well as fellowship
16 and employment opportunities for participants in the
17 YALI program.

18 (f) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 180
19 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
20 retary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of
21 the United States Agency for International Development
22 and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and
23 agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional
24 committees a plan for implementing the YALI program,
25 including the following:

1 (1) A description of clearly defined program
2 goals, targets, and planned outcomes for each year
3 and for the duration of implementation of the pro-
4 gram.

5 (2) A strategy to monitor and evaluate the pro-
6 gram and progress made toward achieving such
7 goals, targets, and planned outcomes.

8 (3) A strategy to ensure the program is pro-
9 moting United States foreign policy goals in Africa,
10 including ensuring that the program is clearly
11 branded and paired with robust public diplomacy ef-
12 forts.

13 (g) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for
15 5 years, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the
16 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
17 national Development, shall submit to the appropriate
18 congressional committees and publish in a publicly acces-
19 sible, internet-based form, a report on the following:

20 (1) The progress made toward achieving the
21 goals, targets, and planned outcomes described in
22 subsection (f)(1), including an overview of the pro-
23 gram implemented in the previous year and an esti-
24 mated number of beneficiaries.

1 (2) An assessment of how the YALI program is
2 contributing to and promoting United States-Africa
3 relations, particularly in areas of increased private
4 sector investment, trade promotion, support to civil
5 society, improved public administration, and fos-
6 tering entrepreneurship and youth empowerment.

7 (3) Recommendations for improvements or
8 changes to the program and implementation plan, if
9 any, that would improve their effectiveness during
10 subsequent years of implementation of the program.

11 (h) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
12 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate con-
13 gressional committees” means—

14 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
15 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
16 resentatives; and

17 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
18 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

1 (i) SUNSET.—The requirements of this section shall
2 terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of
3 the enactment of this Act.

Passed the House of Representatives April 20, 2021.

Attest:

Clerk.

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