

Opening Statement of Mr. Ademola Adewale-Sadik
Nominee to Serve as United States Executive Director of the African Development Bank
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
March 26, 2026

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee: it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for United States Executive Director of the African Development Bank. Allow me to begin by thanking President Trump for the trust that he has placed in me by offering this opportunity to serve our country. I would also like to thank Treasury Secretary Bessent for his confidence and support, as well as the Members and staff of this Committee for their engagement in advance of this hearing.

Watching these proceedings from home is my wife of over seven years, Mrs. Morenike Adewale-Sadik. Morenike: thank you for the love and companionship that we have shared since we first met. Alongside Morenike is our daughter and first child, Arabella, whose arrival last month brought us immense joy. My parents, Mr. Abiodun and Dr. Omowunmi Sadik, are here today. They raised me on hard work, education, and Christian values, and I am grateful for that upbringing. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my parents-in-law, Mr. Oluseyi and Dr. Omobola Johnson, who have joined us remotely. The Johnsons have always treated me like a son, and I appreciate the care with which they nurtured their daughter into the woman I married.

There is perhaps no better role for a naturalized American born in Lagos, Nigeria than the position of United States Executive Director of the African Development Bank. The American Dream has brought me untold opportunities, and if confirmed I hope to contribute to building those same opportunities across the continent. Africa's vast potential stretches from critical minerals and digital infrastructure to transportation and energy abundance. Under a coherent mandate to underwrite that potential and with strong American participation, the AfDB can be an important instrument of economic mobilization.

President Trump has outlined a clear and consistent vision whereby responsible members of the marketplace of nations will find both a listening ear and a dealmaking hand at the White House. My time on the African continent has proven to me that it is full of such nations. Because Africa is home to the plurality of our planet's resources, durable relationships across the continent are critical to American economic and national security.

The AfDB is the natural arena in which to cultivate such relationships. The United States is also the Bank's second-largest shareholder, and the Bank enjoys a AAA credit rating in part because of our position. These facts bring me to three central beliefs:

First: American taxpayers deserve value for their dollars deployed at the AfDB.

Second: I have the utmost conviction in the ability of America's world-class private sector and Africa's ambitious economies to deliver that value together.

Third: The Trump Administration has a unique opportunity to enhance commercial ties between our country and the African continent, and seizing this window is a worthwhile endeavor. Our influence at the AfDB can be central to President Trump's economic agenda, and the AfDB's success will bring mutual benefit to both the United States and our African allies.

If confirmed, I will leverage my business and legal backgrounds to advocate for American interests at the Bank and across the region every day. I will also bring relevant firsthand experience with me to Abidjan, because I have seen, invested in, and lived the developmental imperatives of the African continent my entire life. If the AfDB is effective, then Africa will unlock endless possibilities for itself and its trading partners. The AfDB will be effective if it focuses exclusively on its core economic development and poverty reduction missions, is backed by American leadership, and is governed with collective accountability.

I have always marveled at the enduring power and extraordinary ingenuity of American commerce. It is the very exceptionalism that makes America the sole indispensable counterparty. It is also what we can bring to bear by way of the AfDB. I believe that Africa's development is the single greatest expansion opportunity for global GDP. Our positive, proactive involvement on the continent will determine the direction of American, African and world affairs for decades to come. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee on these vital considerations.

I once told my father-in-law that "the best time to be alive is always tomorrow." I know that America's best days are in the future. The same holds true for an Africa that is closely aligned with the United States. I am passionate about drawing the continent of my birth closer to the country that adopted me and further from our adversaries. The chance to do this at the AfDB would be the privilege of a lifetime.

Thank you again, I look forward to answering your questions and, if confirmed, to working closely with this Committee.