

News

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Acrow Sees Improvement of Rural Road Systems as Key to Continued Economic Growth in Africa; Says Outdated Perception of Africa Hurts U.S. Businesses

Participates in the First U.S.-Africa Business Forum as Part of President Obama's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit

(Parsippany, New Jersey) – 11 August 2014 – Acrow Bridge, a leading international bridge engineering and supply company, joined a select group of U.S. companies at the inaugural [U.S.-Africa Business Forum](#) on August 5 in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker and philanthropist Michael Bloomberg as part of the White House's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, the exclusive event brought together President Obama and 45 African heads of state with U.S. and African business leaders to focus on expanding trade and investment opportunities in Africa for U.S. businesses.

“Entrepreneurship is alive and well in Africa, with hundreds of thousands of new businesses being established every year across the Continent,” said Paul Sullivan, Acrow's Director of International Business Development. “What's equally remarkable is that this growth is happening in spite of the fact that much of the population does not have access to key building blocks of economic prosperity, such as dependable roads and electricity.”

Hundreds of Acrow's prefabricated modular steel bridges are already part of the transportation infrastructure of approximately 13 different African countries. Many of these bridges were installed to provide vital access to schools and medical clinics that were previously inaccessible to surrounding communities.

“A robust and reliable rural road system throughout Africa would reach the 80% of the population that does not live in urban areas,” said Bill Killeen, President and CEO of Acrow. “Such a network would serve, among other things, as the backbone of local commerce. Markets that were once unreachable due to impassable terrain are made accessible through bridges and roadways, enabling the rapid expansion of trade within and across borders and beyond. In our view, when local, regional and international trade opportunities are equally available to a full spectrum of people and businesses in rural and urban locations, sustainable economic growth can be achieved.”

News

Acrow also points out that a robust rural bridge and road network would lower the costs of building and operating the power plants and water systems needed across the Continent. “This supports President Obama’s goal of bringing electricity for the first time to 60 million African households and businesses,” Killeen added.

“What holds back many U.S. companies, especially mid-sized businesses, from exploring opportunities in Africa is the common misperception that the Continent presents too many business, travel and health related challenges,” Killeen said. “Yet nothing could be farther from reality. The vast majority of Africa is stable, democratic and operating in a regulatory environment that fosters good business practices. We continue to see and support the region as an ongoing opportunity for U.S. businesses.”

About Acrow Bridge

Acrow Bridge has been serving the transportation and construction industries for more than 60 years with a full line of modular steel bridging solutions for vehicle, rail, vessel, military and pedestrian use. For more information, please visit www.acrow.com.

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