



United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State
for African Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520-3430

AUG 10 2011

Dear Dr. Sypher:

On behalf of Secretary Hillary Clinton and the U.S. Department of State, I would like to sincerely thank Purdue University for lending us Dr. Frederi Viens over the past academic year through the Franklin Fellowship Program. He has been an extraordinary member of our team here in the Bureau of African Affairs and he will be sorely missed when he leaves to return to his students and colleagues. The Franklin Fellowship Program is one of a handful of highly competitive State Department programs that aim to integrate science into our foreign policy decision making. Dr. Viens is the first scientist to broadly advise the Africa Bureau on science and technology issues, and to develop a network of government contacts capable of efficiently handling U.S. diplomatic engagement toward the major challenges facing Africa, including climate change, environmental degradation, deforestation, threats to agriculture and water resources, and demographic pressures. His analyses and insights have provided greater depth and context to decision makers and helped inform our Ambassadors in the field as they consider important policy and programmatic questions.

As a highly bureaucratic organization, the State Department has a number of disparate offices that focus on scientific issues. However, none of those offices focus exclusively on Africa, nor do they often understand the African context and the challenges we face in implementing our overarching policy goals on issues such as climate change. One of Dr. Viens' most important contributions was his success in developing meaningful, professional relationships with contacts

Ms. Beverly Davenport Sypher, Ph.D.,
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throughout the building in order to better focus and coordinate our policy with respect to Africa. In addition, he established our Bureau's credibility in the science arena and became a respected source of expertise and information – other offices now seek us out early on in the process rather than presenting us with directives at the end of the decision-making process. The result is better-informed policymaking with realistic goals and objectives for Africa.

Dr. Viens' tenure in the Africa Bureau came at a particularly important time since the State Department is gearing up for the 17th Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is scheduled to take place in Durban, South Africa later this year. This is the first time the UNFCCC COP will take place in sub-Saharan Africa and many are viewing it as "Africa's COP." However, the issues of climate change mitigation and adaptation are challenging ones in Africa. Over the past year, Dr. Viens has worked closely with our colleagues in the Office of the Special Envoy for Climate Change to help them understand the interplay of issues and to develop a program and objectives that are more likely to resonate with the Africans. He has effectively laid the groundwork so that as we head into the final months of planning for COP 17, the State Department is well prepared to develop an effective agenda and messaging.

As his final project, Dr. Viens has developed a comprehensive analysis of challenges and opportunities with respect to energy development in Africa with a special focus on renewable energy. He is working with colleagues in our office and in the building to develop specific policy goals and a concrete implementation strategy. Secretary Clinton recognizes the growing importance of energy in global diplomacy, as evidenced by her appointment of a Special Envoy for Energy just a few months ago. With respect to Africa, sustainable development is inextricably linked to the continent's ability to responsibly develop its energy sector. Dr. Viens' focus on this issue and his efforts to target our foreign policy accordingly will enable us to work effectively to advance a specific agenda and realize results.

Dr. Viens' work here in the Africa Bureau exemplifies what we hope to achieve by bringing scientists into our foreign policy decision making process – and my brief comments here really only represent the tip of the iceberg as Dr. Viens has made far more contributions on numerous fronts than I could successfully detail here. Thank you to you and Purdue University for supporting his fellowship program. While I know that Dr. Viens has learned much from his

experience here, I think the Bureau of African Affairs came out way ahead in terms of what we have gained by having Dr. Viens with us for this past year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnnie Carson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left of the name.

Johnnie Carson

cc: Rebecca W. Doerge, Ph.D.