



SERSAS Resolution in Response to Profane Remarks from President Donald Trump 2 February 2018

On 12 January, the [Washington Post](#) reported:

President Trump grew frustrated with lawmakers Thursday in the Oval Office when they discussed protecting immigrants from Haiti, El Salvador and African countries as part of a bipartisan immigration deal, according to several people briefed on the meeting. “Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?” Trump said, according to these people, referring to countries mentioned by the lawmakers.

Drafted by concerned SERSASians, the Africanist organization responded with the following resolution:

As a community of scholars whose teaching and research focus on Africa, home to one sixth of the world’s population, we collectively condemn President Trump’s recent portrayal of countries in the region as “shitholes.” While we recognize that many African countries experience poverty, corruption, and conflict, President Trump’s language conflates the structural conditions behind these phenomena with the actual human beings who live there. Ultimately, President Trump’s comments represent an assault on human dignity that is beneath the American presidency.

As educators, we call on Americans of all backgrounds, especially journalists and political leaders to:

- 1) Move beyond Afro-pessimistic stereotypes and learn more about a continent to which a significant number of Americans trace their ancestry.
- 2) Learn more about the important contributions African migrants make to American colleges and universities and to our broader communities.
- 3) Learn more about the history of African countries and the variety of internal and external factors, including United States foreign policy, that have shaped current conditions in the region.
- 4) Learn more about the diversity of experiences among and within African countries, from the history of competitive elections in Botswana, Ghana, and Senegal, to the complex drivers of political violence in South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Somalia.
- 5) Recognize the important contributions African countries and people make to the security and economic prosperity of the United States.
- 6) Cherish, conserve and protect the diverse environments, flora and fauna of Africa as a vital part of our global natural heritage.

We are committed to providing guidance, expertise, and resources in our ongoing effort to educate Americans about Africa.