

US Vice President, Kamala Harris, started on Saturday 25/04/2023, a week-long trip to Africa in what is being seen as the latest attempt at counterbalancing China's influence.

Vice President Harris kicked off her tour in Ghana and will later visit Tanzania and Zambia as she focuses on economic development, climate change, food security and a rising youth population.

Harris plans were to visit a recording studio and meet with women entrepreneurs in Accra, and then stop by a tech incubator in Dar es Salaam.

In Lusaka, Zambia's capital, Harris is expected to meet with business and philanthropic leaders to talk about expanding access to digital and financial systems.

"She's going to give a major speech in the capital of Ghana and also engage with a lot of young people in the country. She's focused a lot on the rising youth generation in Africa. The median age in the continent is only 19 years old and roughly half of the world's population growth is going to happen in Africa over the next several decades, which is just an enormous potential for the region. When she gets to Tanzania, she'll be meeting with the country's first woman president. And that's a place where the country's trying to solidify its democracy and try to institute some governing reforms. So we should expect her to highlight some of that as well. And then on to Zambia, where there will be more talk about entrepreneurship, food security, other issues that kind of have dominated conversations in Africa", explained Chris Megerian, Associated Press White House Reporter.

For the American administration, the objective is to deepen and reframe U.S. relationships in Africa focussing on the continent as a place of growth and investment destination, not just aid packages.

"Harris is going to be facing sort of a delicate balancing act on this trip. A lot of US outreach to Africa is rooted in this US-China rivalry. China has a lot of influence in the continent through lending countries money, through building major infrastructure projects like roads and railroads. But at the same time, **US **officials don't want African leaders to feel like they're being caught in the middle of this geopolitical chess match between the US and China. They want to make African leaders feel like they're dealing with them on their own terms. And that's

something that the vice president will need to balance while she's there to try to form partnerships that help the US and its geopolitical goals, but also create its own relationships with African countries as well", concluded the Associated Press White House Reporter.

Harris's visit will be closely watched as she is the first person of colour and first woman to serve as vice president.

Her mother was born in India, her father was born in Jamaica, and she was raised in California.