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President and Mrs. Bush Discuss Africa Policy, Trip to Africa

Smithsonian National Museum of African Art
Washington, D.C.

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10:13 A.M. EST

MRS. BUSH: Thank you very much, Mark. I get to speak first and introduce the President. Thank you, Mark, for your efforts to lead our country's efforts to defeat HIV/AIDS. Thank you very, very much for everything you do around the world.

This is such important work -- and it's work that's saving lives across Africa. Thanks to everyone who helped produce this video, and thanks to everyone here for coming.

Tomorrow, President Bush and I leave for what will be my fifth trip to Africa since 2001, and his second trip to Africa since 2001. I've seen the determination of the people across Africa -- and the compassion of the people of the United States of America.

This compassion is at work through U.S. initiatives that improve education, reduce poverty, and fight pandemic disease. In Ghana, at the Accra Teacher Training Institute, students receive textbooks supplied through our country's Africa Education Initiative. In Mozambique, mosquito nets are provided to children by the President's Malaria Initiative. In Mali, President Tour is using a Millennium Challenge Compact to build his country's infrastructure, and to bring prosperity to Mali's people. In South Africa, HIV-positive pregnant mothers keep their babies HIV free with support from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

In Zambia, I visited the Mututa Memorial Center, which is supported by PEPFAR. At this center, caregivers fan out on bicycle and foot to all the neighborhoods around, and they go door to door with care kits and with antiretroviral drugs. They tend to the people who are sick and they encourage their



clients to be tested for HIV. And they literally just cold-call door to door, and often find people who are so sick in bed they can't get up to get help for themselves.

My daughter Jenna was on that trip with me, and we had a roundtable with some caregivers and some patients. And two young HIV-positive women, Sarah and Mwelwa, cried as they told us during this roundtable about their stories of -- they told us their stories of abuse and rape and how they became HIV positive.

Mwelwa is an AIDS orphan, and Sarah was the oldest child living without her mother because her mother had to live in another place to find work. So both girls were vulnerable to what happened to them.

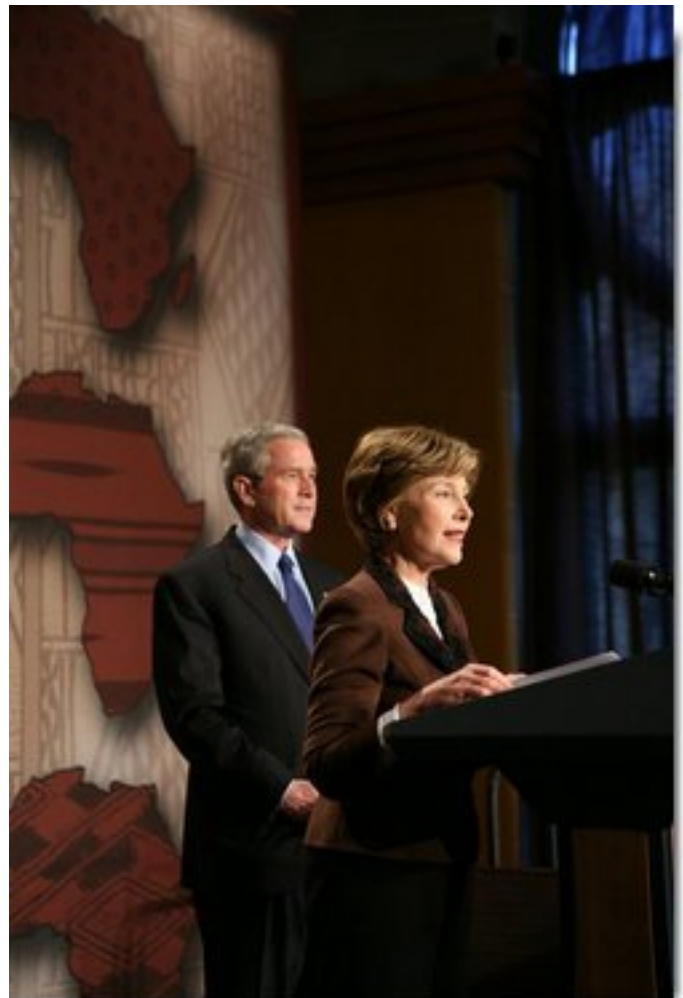
As Jenna and I went up to them afterwards, after the roundtable, and I told them in private that Jenna had written a book about a girl in Central America who had a similar experience to them, Jenna and I were moved when these girls said to Jenna, "I wish you would write my story."

Of all these visits to Africa, on all of them, I've heard stories like Sarah's and Mwelwa's. These are stories of courage and hope, and they're also stories being written with the help of the American people. Both in Africa and here at home, Americans share their time and their money with those in need.

American business leaders are working to provide safe drinking water for children in Zambia. American schoolteachers are holding book drives to rebuild libraries in Liberia. Last summer, I met an American man named Steve Bolinger who is helping to feed AIDS patients in Senegal. During his time in the Peace Corps -- (applause) -- Steve learned how important good nutrition is to people who are living with HIV. So Steve is now using his experience growing up on a farm in Kansas, and his experience as a Peace Corps volunteer, to run his own NGO, Development in Gardening -- or, appropriately, DIG.

Across Africa, American citizens like Steve are giving the very personal gifts of their talent and their energy -- and they're saving lives. They represent one of America's most distinguishing characteristics, and that is our sincere desire to see other people succeed.

Now I get to introduce a man of deep compassion, whose work has saved many lives. And I'm very proud to introduce my husband, President George W. Bush. (Applause.)



THE PRESIDENT: I've been looking forward to coming to the museum, and there's an added benefit, and that is, I get to be introduced by my wife on Valentine's Day. (Laughter.) Happy Valentine's.

This morning Laura and I join all Americans in honoring the life of Congressman Tom Lantos. In his remarkable 80 years, Tom Lantos survived the Nazi camps of Hungary to reach the halls of Congress. As a representative from California, he was a fearless defender of democracy, a powerful advocate of human rights, and a strong supporter of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Our prayers are with Annette and the Lantos family. We thank God for his service.

Five years ago, Laura and I made our first visit to Africa. Since then, as she mentioned, she's taken three more trips. And every time, she came back with fascinating stories, some of which she just shared with you. And tomorrow, as she mentioned, we're going back, and I'm really looking forward to it.

We're going to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia. Each of these countries is blessed with natural beauty, vibrant culture, and an unmistakable spirit of energy and optimism. Africa in the 21st century is a continent of potential. That's how we view it. I hope that's how our fellow citizens view Africa. It's a place where democracy is advancing, where economies are growing, and leaders are meeting challenges with purpose and determination.

Our visit will give me a chance to meet with people who are making the transformation on the continent possible. I'm going to witness the generosity of the American people firsthand. It will give me a chance to remind our fellow citizens about what a compassionate people we are. And I will assure our partners in Africa that the United States is committed to them today, tomorrow, and long into their continent's bright future.

And so I thank you for giving us a chance to come and visit with you. You could call this the send-off speech.

I really want to thank Mark Dybul. I love to support people who are making history. I can't think of any more noble history than to be leading the compassionate effort of the American people to help save lives. And Ambassador, you're doing a fabulous job.

I also want to welcome Admiral Tim Ziemer. Admiral, good to see you. He's in charge of making sure that we meet our goals in reducing the scourge of malaria. Thanks for coming. You and Dybul are results-oriented people. Let me say, I'm a results-oriented President, and so when I meet with you, I ask you, what are the results? (Laughter.) And you'll hear in a minute they're very positive.

I appreciate very much Dr. Samper and his wife Adriana for welcoming us. Thank you for leading this important institute.

I also want to thank Sharon Patton, the Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. Thanks for welcoming us. It's not so easy, like, to welcome the President. (Laughter.) It turns out the

entourages are probably bigger than the visitors to your museum -- (laughter) -- but thank you for coming. This is an important part of the Washington scene. I'd urge our fellow citizens to come to this important museum.

I want to thank the board members of the Smithsonian National Museum of Africa Art who have joined us today.

I welcome Jendayi Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Are you going on the trip? Yes. Better get home and pack. (Laughter.) Thanks for coming. I'm proud to work with you.

Henrietta Fore, Administrator of USAID, is with us. Henrietta, thanks for coming.

I better be careful about how I say this for fear of having a huge burst of applause, but I'd like to introduce the Director of the Peace Corps -- (applause) -- Ron Tschetter. Ron, thanks for coming; it's good to see you, sir. And I appreciate you bringing the five-person cheering section with you. (Laughter.) There seems to be a groundswell here. (Laughter.)

I welcome the members of the Diplomatic Corps. Thanks for coming.

And finally I do also want to do what Mark did and thank Chuck Dages of Warner Brothers for this trailer. It's good. I appreciate your support.

The museum is a testament to America's long connection to Africa. At least that's how I view it. Africa is the birthplace of humanity, the home of great civilizations, and the source of enduring achievements in culture and art. Africa has also witnessed some of mankind's most shameful chapters -- from the evils of the slave trade to the condescension of colonialism. Even the joy of independence -- which arrived with such promise -- was undermined by corruption, conflict, and disease. Just a decade ago, much of Africa seemed to be on the brink of collapse, and much of the world seemed content to let it collapse.

Today, that's changing. A new generation of African leaders is stepping forward, and turning their continent around. International organizations, and faith-based groups, and the private sector are more engaged than ever. And in one of the major priorities of my Presidency, the United States has fundamentally altered our policy toward Africa.

America's approach to Africa stems from both our ideals and our interests. We believe that every human life is precious. We believe that our brothers and sisters in Africa have dignity and value, because they bear the mark of our Creator. We believe our spirit is renewed when we help African children and families live and thrive.

Africa is also increasingly vital to our strategic interests. We have seen that conditions on the other side of the world can have a direct impact on our own security. We know that if Africa were to continue on the old path of decline, it would be more likely to produce failed states, foster ideologies of radicalism, and spread violence across borders. We also know that if Africa grows in freedom, and

prosperity, and justice, its people will choose a better course. People who live in societies based on freedom and justice are more likely to reject the false promise of the extremist ideology. Citizens who see a future of opportunity are more likely to build hopeful economies that benefit all the people. Nations that replace disease and despair with healing and hope will help Africa do more than just survive -- it will help Africa succeed.

For all these reasons, America has dramatically increased our commitment to development in Africa. We have also revolutionized the way we approach development. Too many nations continue to follow either the paternalistic notion that treats African countries as charity cases, or a model of exploitation that seeks only to buy up their resources. America rejects both approaches. Instead, we are treating African leaders as equal partners, asking them to set clear goals, and expecting them to produce measurable results. For their part, more African leaders are willing to be held to high standards. And together, we're pioneering a new era in development.

The new era is rooted in a powerful truth: Africa's most valuable resource is not its oil, it's not its diamonds, it is the talent and creativity of its people. So we are partnering with African leaders to empower their people to lift up their nations and write a new chapter in their history.

First, we are working to empower Africans to overcome poverty by helping them grow their economies. After a long period of stagnation, many of Africa's economies are springing to life. As a whole, sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow nearly 7 percent this year. The economies of Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Tanzania are among the fastest-growing in the world. And across Africa, poverty is beginning to decline. Don't get me wrong, it's still a poor place, but poverty is beginning to decline.

This resurgence shows the strength of the entrepreneurial spirit in Africa. America is working to help unleash that spirit across the continent. Along with our fellow G8 nations, we have relieved some \$34 billion in debt from African nations in the past 18 months. (Applause.) That is roughly the same level of debt that was cancelled in the previous 11 years combined. We have also made historic increases in foreign aid. In my first term, we more than doubled development assistance to Africa -- part of the largest expansion of American development assistance since the Marshall Plan. (Applause.) At the beginning of my second term, I promised to double our assistance again by 2010. And the budget I sent Congress last week will ensure that we meet this commitment.

And just as important, we're changing the way we deliver assistance. We created what's called the Millennium Challenge Account, which offers financial support to the world's most promising developing nations -- nations that fight corruption, nations that govern justly, nations that open up their economies, and nations that invest in the health and education of their people.

America is serving as an investor, not a donor. We believe that countries can adopt the habits necessary to provide help for their people. That's what we believe. And we're willing to invest in leaders that are doing just that. So far, more than two-thirds of the MCA's \$5.5 billion is being invested in Africa. And on my trip next week, I will sign the largest project in the program's history -- nearly \$700 million compact with Tanzania. (Applause.)

Other nations are seeing the benefits of these agreements. They are moving ahead with the tough

economic, political, and social reforms necessary to compete for a compact of their own. In fact, there is now more competition for funds than there are funds available, which ought to say two things: One, that this is evidence that the American taxpayers are getting good value for their dollars. In other words, if nations are willing to fight corruption, work on rule of law, support their people and not themselves, then it makes sense to invest with them. And secondly, it is evidence that Congress needs to fully fund this important initiative.

The best way to generate economic growth in Africa is to expand trade and investment. When businesses in Africa can sell their products and services around the globe, they create a culture of self-reliance and opportunity. One of the most powerful incentives for trade is the African Growth and Opportunity Act. And I appreciate the fact that Congress has extended this good law. Since 2001, exports from sub-Saharan Africa to the United States have tripled. It's also important for our citizens to know that U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa have more than doubled.

On my visit to Ghana, I will meet entrepreneurs who are benefiting from new access to U.S. markets. My message to them will be clear, just like it is to the Congress: For the benefit of Africans and for the benefit of Americans alike, we must maintain our commitment to free and fair trade.

Attracting foreign capital is another key to growth. In recent years, African nations have taken impressive steps to improve their investment climates. According to a World Bank report, 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa recently adopted reforms to make it easier to start a business and to register property. That may sound simple to Americans, but these are important steps to be able to attract capital for investment purposes. When investors look for a promising market, they are increasingly turning to Africa. And in a hopeful sign, private capital flows to sub-Saharan Africa now exceed development assistance.

We've taken several steps to build on this progress. Last year, we launched the Africa Financial Sector Initiative. As part of this effort, our Overseas Private Investment Corporation mobilized \$750 million in investment capital for African businesses. Today, I'm announce that OPIC will support five new investment funds that will mobilize an additional \$875 million, for a total of more than \$1.6 billion in new capital.

And next week, I'm going to sign a bilateral investment treaty with Rwanda. This will be America's first such treaty in sub-Saharan Africa in nearly a decade. It reflects our shared commitment to systems of fair and open investment. It will bring more capital to Rwanda's dynamic and growing economy. Look, the idea of somehow being able to help people through just giving them money isn't working. That's why I appreciate the efforts of Rob Mosbacher and OPIC, recognizing that when you invest in capital -- invest capital, you create jobs. Paternalism has got to be a thing of the past. Joint venturing with good, capable people is what the future is all about. (Applause.)

But in the long run, the best way to lift lives in Africa is to tear down barriers to investment and trade around the world. And we have an opportunity to do that through the Doha Round of trade talks. Look, Doha is important to enhance trade, but if you're truly interested in eliminating poverty, we ought to be reducing tariffs and barriers all across the globe. The United States stands ready to cut farm subsidies, and agricultural tariffs, and other trade barriers that disadvantage developing countries. On the other

hand, we expect the rest of the world -- especially the most advanced developing countries --to do the same. And if we both make good-faith efforts, we can reach a successful Doha agreement this year.

Secondly, we're working to empower Africans to alleviate hunger, expand education, and fight disease. America is proud to be the world's largest provider of food assistance, including emergency food stocks that have saved lives in places like Ethiopia, or Sudan, and other African nations. It's a noble effort on our people's part. I don't know if -- most Americans don't understand that we're the world's largest provider of food to feed the hungry, but we are. (Applause.)

Yet our ultimate objective is to do more than respond to the hungry -- it is to help African countries feed their own people. So I have proposed that America purchase crops directly from farmers in Africa, instead of just shipping food assistance from the developed world. (Applause.) This initiative would build up local agriculture markets. It would help break the cycle of famine. And it deserves the full support of the United States Congress.

We're also focusing on education. I'm looking forward to seeing the President of Tanzania, he's a good guy. Here's what he said; he said "It's an indisputable fact that education is key to development." Across Africa, students are eager to learn, and often they lack quality teachers and just basic supplies. Things we take for granted in America are just lacking in parts of Africa. So in 2002, I launched the Africa Education Initiative, the goal of which is to distribute more than 15 million textbooks, train nearly a million teachers, and provide scholarships for 550,000 girls by 2010. And we're headed to achieving that goal. In other words, these just weren't empty words, these were concrete, solid goals, being funded as a result of the generosity of the Congress and the American people.

Last year, I also announced a new International Education Initiative, which will help make basic education available to 4 million people in Ghana, Liberia, and other nations. Laura and I are looking forward to talking to the leaders of Ghana and Liberia about this important, transformative initiative. With both these steps, we are matching the enthusiasm of African educators with the generosity of our taxpayers -- and we believe strongly that this will open up the door to opportunity for millions. The good news is, so do the leaders of the countries we're going to visit.

The greatest threat to Africa is disease. The greatest threat for a successful Africa is the scourge of HIV/AIDS and malaria. Two out of every three people afflicted with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa. The disease is the leading cause of death in the region. Just a few years ago, there were fears that HIV/AIDS could wipe out much of the continent's population, with death rates that would rival the Black Plague of the Middle Ages.

We responded. We responded with the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. It's the largest international health initiative in history to fight a single disease. (Applause.) In 2002, we pledged \$15 billion over five years to support HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care. We set some clear principles on how that money would be spent. We put local partners in the lead, because they know their people and their needs. We opened the funding to faith-based groups -- healers willing to deliver medicine to remote villages by bicycle or on foot. We stressed the importance of changing behavior, so that fewer people are infected in the first place.

And the results are striking. When I visited sub-Saharan Africa five years ago, or when we visited five years ago, 50,000 people were receiving medicine to treat HIV/AIDS. And when we return this week, there will be more than 1.3 million. (Applause.) One person who knows the benefits of the Emergency Plan is Tatu Msangi. She's a single mother from Tanzania. When she became pregnant, Tatu went to a clinic run by a Christian group. Souls showing up to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves. You know, it didn't take a federal law to say, go to Africa to provide love for Tatu, it took a higher calling. These goals responded.

She learned she was HIV-positive, and enrolled in a program designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission. She went on to deliver a healthy, HIV-free girl, named Faith. I will see Tatu next week in Tanzania, but it's not going to be the first time I met her. See, a few weeks ago, she and Faith endured a rather windy State of the Union address. She sat with Laura in the box, here in the capital of the nation that helped save their lives.

In all, the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has benefited tens of millions in Africa. Some call this a remarkable success. I call it a good start. Last May, I proposed to double our nation's initial pledge, to \$30 billion over the next five years. (Applause.) The people on the continent of Africa have to know they're not alone. The G8 has shown leadership by agreeing to match our \$30 billion pledge. The private sector has made generous contributions as well. Think of what Warner Brothers has done, for example. And now the time has come for Congress to act. Members of both parties should reauthorize the Emergency Plan, maintain the principles that have made it a success, and double our commitment to this noble cause.

Malaria is another devastating killer. In some African countries, malaria takes as many lives as HIV/AIDS. And the vast majority of those taken by malaria are children under the age of five. Every one of these deaths is unnecessary, because the disease is entirely preventable and treatable. So in 2005, America launched a five-year, \$1.2 billion initiative to provide the insecticide-treated beds, indoor spraying, cutting-edge drugs that are necessary to defeat this disease. It's not a complicated strategy. It doesn't take a lot of medical research. We know how to solve the problem. That's why I put the Admiral there. He knows how to solve problems. He can get us from point A to point B in a straight line. Well, nearly straight line. (Laughter.) And so we set a historic goal -- if you have a treatable problem on hand, then you're able to set measurable goals. And the goal is to cut the number of malaria-related deaths in 15 African nations by half. That's the goal.

Like the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the malaria initiative empowers leaders on the ground to design strategies that work best for their nations. For example, President Yayi of Benin has called the fight against malaria "a fight against misery." With the help of the malaria initiative, he's leading a campaign to deliver insecticide-treated bed nets to children under five in Benin. I'm looking forward to hearing how that's going when we meet him on Benin on our first stop. I can't wait to find out how well this initiative is doing.

Like the Emergency Plan, the malaria initiative has been matched by G8 nations, which have pledged to cut malaria deaths by half in an additional 15 countries. This initiative has also been greeted with generous support from the private sector, faith-based groups, and Americans who want to do something to save somebody's life. You can buy a \$10 bed net and ship it to Africa to save a life. It doesn't take much money, but it takes a big heart. One of the interesting gifts Laura and I got a couple

of years ago for Christmas was bed nets in our name. It made us feel great.

Like the Emergency Plan, the malaria initiative is producing undeniable results. In just over two years, the initiative has reached more than 25 million people. (Applause.) According to new data, malaria rates are dropping dramatically in many parts of Africa. If we stay on this path, an extraordinary achievement is within reach -- Africa can turn a disease that has taken its children for centuries into a thing of the past. And wouldn't that be fantastic? And so Laura and I are going to spend time with these leaders, saying, what a noble opportunity; what a great goal; what a great way to serve humankind.

Finally, we're working to empower Africans to end conflicts, strengthen democracy, and promote peace. When I took office, Africa was home to six major conflicts -- in Angola, Burundi, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and southern Sudan. We concluded that the best way to broker peace was to support the efforts of African leaders on the ground, instead of dictating solutions from Washington, D.C. And today, every one of them has made progress toward peace and stability.

For example, the United States worked closely with Nigeria to help end the Liberian civil war. When the international community called for Charles Taylor to step down in 2003, the President of Nigeria provided a plane to take him in exile. When U.S. Marines deployed to Liberia, Nigerian peacekeepers deployed at the same time. And today, Liberia's long war is over. And next week in Monrovia, Laura and I will meet with Africa's first democratically-elected woman President: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. (Applause.)

Even without major conflict or civil war, security challenges remain in Africa, and we're working closely with local partners to address them. The Department of Defense has established a new African Command, which will work closely with African governments to crack down on human trafficking, piracy, and terrorism across the continent. We are employing diplomatic tools as well. In Eastern Congo, we worked with leaders on the ground to broker the recent agreements to demobilize all remaining armed groups. And we stand ready to help all sides to implement them. In Kenya, we are backing the efforts of former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to end the crisis.

And when we're on the continent I've asked Condi Rice -- that would be Secretary Rice -- to travel to Kenya to support the work of the former Secretary General, and to deliver a message directly to Kenya's leaders and people: There must be an immediate halt to violence, there must be justice for the victims of abuse, and there must be a full return to democracy. (Applause.)

In Darfur, the United States will continue to call the killing what it is - genocide. We will continue to deliver humanitarian aid. We will continue to enforce sanctions, tough sanctions, against the Sudanese government officials, rebel leaders, and others responsible for violence. We expect other nations to join us in this effort to save lives from the genocide that is taking place. We will use all our diplomatic resources to urge full deployment of an effective United Nations force. The decision was made to count on the United Nations to provide the force necessary to protect people, and so we're going to support their efforts. I must confess, I'm a little frustrated by how slow things are moving. And yet we will support their efforts to find forces necessary to make a robust contribution to save lives.

On this trip, I'm going to visit with brave peacekeepers from Rwanda, a nation that knows the pain of

genocide and was the first country to send troops into Darfur. Other nations need to follow Rwanda's example. Other nations need to take this issue seriously, just like the United States does, and provide more manpower for this urgent mission. And when they do, I pledge America will provide the training and equipment necessary to deploy the peacekeepers to Darfur. (Applause.)

America also stands with all in Africa who live in the quiet pain of tyranny. We will confront tyranny. In Zimbabwe, a discredited dictator presides over food shortages, staggering inflation, and harsh repression. The decent and talented people of that country deserve much better. America will continue to support freedom in Zimbabwe. And I urge neighbors in the region, including South Africa, to do the same. We look forward to the hour when this nightmare is over, and the people of Zimbabwe regain their freedom.

These are great challenges, but there is even greater cause for hope. In the past four years alone, there have been more than 50 democratic elections in Africa. Thriving free societies have emerged in nations with Islamic majorities, Christian majorities, majorities of other beliefs -- which is a powerful rebuke to the ideology of the extremists. In many nations, women have exercised the right to vote and run for office. Rwanda now has the highest percentage of female legislators in the world. (Applause.) Overall, more than two-thirds of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa are free. And for the rest, the direction of history is clear, so long as the United States does not lose its nerve, and retreat into isolationism and protectionism. The day will come when a region once dismissed as the "dark continent" enjoys the light of liberty.

The United States must remain fully committed to the new era of development that we have begun with our partners in Africa. It's in our national interest we do so. I'm going to work closely with the G8 nations to ensure they keep their promises as well. Congress must continue to show its commitment by fully funding the development programs I described today. You see, saving lives is a calling that crosses partisan lines. It remains equally worthy in both good economic times and times of economic uncertainty.

Across Africa, people have begun to speak of the "Lazarus effect," where communities once given up for dead are coming back to life. This work of healing and redemption is both a matter of conscience and a wise exercise of American influence. The work is not done. In the face of the needs that remain, it's important for the African people to believe the American people are not going to turn away. That's part of the purpose of our trip. The changes taking place in Africa don't always make the headlines. So don't be frustrated, Mark. That means the work is quiet, but it is not thankless.

Last November, I met a woman from Zambia named Bridget Chisenga. Bridget's husband died of AIDS, and she expected to meet the same fate. Then she went to a clinic operated by Catholic Relief Services, funded by the American people. Today, Bridget is healthy. She has a job at the clinic, where she helps provide AIDS medicine to others. I want our fellow citizens to hear what she said: "This face is alive and vibrant because of your initiative. I would like to thank you."

Americans have heard similar words of gratitude and hope in the past. They were said about the people who liberated the concentration camps, and saved the blockaded city of Berlin, and stood firm until the prisoners in the gulags were set free. This spirit of purpose and compassion has always

defined America. And that is why the people of Africa can be certain they will always have a friend and partner in the United States of America.

God bless. (Applause.)

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