

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Seretse Khama Ian Khama of Botswana

November 5, 2009

President Obama. Hello, everybody. I just want to welcome President Khama to the Oval Office and to make a brief statement about Botswana and its relationship to the United States.

Although Botswana is not a large country, it is truly one of the extraordinary success stories in Africa. Since the mid-sixties it has moved on a path of good economic management and outstanding political governance, and as a consequence, you have seen extraordinary improvements in living standards over the last 40 years in Botswana that really are an envy for much of the rest of the continent.

Not only has Botswana shown itself to be an outstanding success, but it's also been a great partner to the United States. And our Governments have cooperated extensively throughout the years. President Khama, I think, has been showing his own extraordinary leadership in helping to move his country forward on a range of issues, from how to deal with the HIV/AIDS crisis, to addressing economic development, to dealing with some of the regional problems that exist. On each of these areas, I think, Botswana has been a real leader.

And so we just want to express our appreciation for the outstanding work that successive Governments in Botswana have been to able to accomplish. We are grateful for the friendship between the people of the United States and Botswana. And I'm looking forward to continuing that strong partnership in the years to come.

So, welcome.

President Khama. Thank you very much. I certainly passed on my appreciation to President Obama for having had the opportunity to meet with him and to share views about the bilateral cooperation that we have had between our two countries: areas on trades; areas on health; and also to share how both countries are tackling this current economic downturn.

And we also had the opportunities to talk about environmental issues, climate change, and the upcoming Copenhagen summit. And lastly, also about regional issues and how we can try and go about entrenching democracy both in the mindset and the way we go about all our activities on the continent, the African Union in particular.

And I would just like to thank you, Mr. President, once again for having given me this opportunity to share my thoughts with you. Thank you very much.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Botswana, President Khama.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Khama, Seretse Khama Ian.

Subjects: Botswana : Economic growth and development; Botswana : HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment strategy; Botswana : President; Botswana : Relations with U.S.

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