

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks With President Macky Sall of Senegal at the United States-Africa Leaders Summit Dinner

December 14, 2022

President Biden. Good evening. Hello, hello. Good evening, everyone.

My name is Joe Biden. I am Jill Biden's husband. And welcome. All of you, welcome to the White House.

And you know, we saw—as you saw coming in, we've decorated the holidays around a theme, which, every year, the President picks a theme or the First Lady picks a theme for the holidays. And the theme this year was "We the People."

These are the first words of our Constitution and the very idea of America. And they're the leading words of many of your constitutions, for: We the people of Kenya. We the people of Namibia. We the people of Liberia. We the people of the Federal Republic of Niger. And so many others.

"We the People" reminds us that our countries' greatest strength lies in just that: our people. Our people lie at the heart of the deep and profound connection that forever binds Africa and the United States together.

We remember the stolen men and women and children who were brought to our shores in chains, subjected to unimaginable cruelty. My nation's original sin was that period. We honor their descendants, who our generations have—for generations have helped build this country and propel it to higher heights, leading the charge, blazing new trails, and forging a better future for everyone in America.

We celebrate an African diaspora community in the United States, millions strong, pulling America [Africa; White House correction] and the United States together in the tight embrace of family. I might add that includes my former boss, a man I was honored to serve with, Barack Obama—beside him for 8 years—who convened the first U.S.-African Leaders Summit back when he was President.

As leaders, our people inspire us. They awaken us—they awaken in us the possibilities that are within our grasp. And there are so many possibilities if we work together. They tell us hard truths that we need to hear. And sometimes, we have trouble listening. They challenge us to live up to the values enshrined in so many of our founding documents and to be worthy of the responsibility given to us by that sacred trust, "We the People."

In my years of being engaged in politics and in international relations, I have never been more optimistic—and I mean it sincerely—I have never been more optimistic about our shared future, because our people—because particularly of our young people in all our countries.

Together, we can deliver a world that is healthier and safer, more equal, more just, more prosperous, and more filled with opportunity for everyone.

So please join me in raising your glass—if I can find one. *[Laughter]* This is mine here?

White House aide. Yes, here.

[At this point, the White House aide handed glasses of wine to President Biden and President Sall.]

President Biden. —in raising your glass to the people of America—to the people of the United States, to the people of Africa, and to the promise and potential of our partnership.

Hear, hear.

[President Biden offered a toast.]

And now I present to you a man who you all know. Mr. President, it's all yours.

President Sall, Chair of the African Union. Thank you very much, President Joseph Biden, First Lady Jill Biden, Madam Vice President Kamala Harris, Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff.

Dear colleagues from Africa, ladies and gentlemen: On behalf of my African colleagues, I thank you, Mr. President, for this wonderful dinner on the occasion of the second U.S.A.-Africa Summit.

Thank you also for your kind invitation. We appreciate the time and effort you and your administration have devoted to the preparatory process of the summit over the past several months. This is a testimony of our longstanding, diverse, and vibrant relations.

This afternoon, Mr. President, during the business summit, your speech was so powerful, so inspiring, and so positive for our common future. We share the same spirit. We want to advance our common agenda with you and take our partnership to the next level in an inclusive approach, bringing together governments, the private sector, civil society, and the African diaspora.

We have been walking in this direction since our arrival in Washington, DC, and we are confident that our summit will produce results that reflect our shared commitment.

On behalf of Africa, I invite all of you to join me for a toast in honor of our host, President Joseph Biden, First Lady Jill Biden. In honor of the American people and for the reinforcement of American-African friendship and cooperation, I thank you.

[President Sall offered a toast.]

President Biden. Bon appétit.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, dinner; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Senegal, President Sall.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Obama, Barack; Sall, Macky.

Subjects: Africa, relations with U.S.; Senegal, President; U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit.

DCPD Number: DCPD202201124.