

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Luis Abinader of the Dominican Republic and an Exchange With Reporters**

*November 2, 2023*

*President Biden.* Well, Mr. President, it's good to see you again.

We were just talking about the last time we saw each other—when I was Vice President—down in the Dominican Republic. I guess that was in 2017?

*President Abinader.* Yes. That was when you visited the Dominican Republic.

*President Biden.* Yes.

And look, the friendship between our countries runs deep, strengthened by generations of Dominicans who have become American citizens. They've got a population here that's real.

And the partnership between our nations is, I think, stronger than ever before——

*President Abinader.* Yes.

*President Biden.* —in large part because of your leadership.

*President Abinader.* Thank you.

*President Biden.* And together, we're expanding opportunities for working people in both our nations, I believe, and—including through our American Partnership for Economic Prosperity.

And we're standing side by side to counter corruption. You've been leading on that, and I appreciate that. And I want to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership on what was, in fact, and always has been an issue in the region.

And you know, finally, we're working together to address the historic humanitarian and security situation in Haiti. As I said at the U.N. General Assembly, the people of Haiti cannot wait. And together, we're going to continue to support the Kenyan-led multinational mission.

And we're going to continue to urge Haitian political actors to come together for the good of their country.

So, Mr. President, I want to thank you again for making the effort to be here. And I look forward to our conversations today about issues that are extremely important for our relationship and the region. And so thank you for being here.

*President Abinader.* Thank you, President Biden. I agree with you that the relation with the United States now is better than ever. And we are—thank you very much for hosting this association for American partnership for economic development with other countries of Latin America.

The Dominican people are your friends, the Dominican people are your allies, and the Dominican people are your partners. As you know, we have more than 2 million Dominican descendants in the United States, which we are very grateful forever of receiving them, and they are also great citizens of this country.

*President Biden.* They are.

*President Abinader.* We share your commitments to strengthen security, democracy, and human rights. We are partners in defending democracy in the region.

And in order to achieve this goal, we must increase, President Biden, and spread prosperity and deliver the fruits of democracy to all our people.

We are firmly committed to fight against illegal drugs and corruption. Any country cannot develop with corruption. And we are fighting corruption, as you already stated, as never before in our country.

And these goals can be better accomplished if we do it through constructive cooperation.

*President Biden.* I agree.

*President Abinader.* The Dominican people are very proud of our economic recovery, which depends to a considerable degree on U.S. trade and tourism. We will continue to work hard to build an even brighter future for all our people.

Mr. President, we look forward to welcoming you soon to the Dominican Republic at the next Summit of the Americas in 2025, where we will continue to develop the bonds of prosperity, security, and democracy that bind us together. And that summit will be in Punta Cana, so you have time to be on the beach.

Thank you.

*President Biden.* Thank you very much.

*President Abinader.* Thank you, President.

*Q.* President Biden——

*[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]*

*Gaza/Safe Passage for U.S. Citizens and Foreign Nationals*

*Q.* President Biden, the pause to get the hostages out—President Biden, the pause to get the hostages out—[inaudible]?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Biden.* The good news: We got out, today, 74 American folks out that are dual citizens. They're coming home.

Anyway, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Dominican Republic, President Abinader.

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