

if we didn't get room for them. And they got them out, and it was fine. It was a wonderful day. I loved it.

*President Boris Yeltsin of Russia*

Q. Have you talked to Boris Yeltsin, Mr. President?

*The President.* No.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:12 a.m. at the State House Lodge. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## Remarks at the Kisowera School in Mukono, Uganda March 24, 1998

*The President.* Thank you very much. Thank you and good afternoon. President Museveni, Mrs. Museveni, Ms. Vice President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker; to Education Minister Mushega; to their Highnesses, the distinguished Kings here; the religious leaders and other distinguished leaders of Uganda; Members of our United States Congress, my Cabinet, and other important citizens and public servants from the United States. And most of all, I want to thank the principals, the teachers, the students for showing me this wonderful school, the wonderful young people who walked down with us today, and the wonderful dancing exhibit we saw here today. Let's give them a big hand, I thought they were quite wonderful. [*Applause*]

As Hillary said, she and our daughter, Chelsea, came to Africa and to Uganda last year. I have heard a great deal about Uganda since then, over and over and over again. [*Laughter*] In selecting countries to visit, I almost felt I didn't need to come here because I knew enough anyway from talking to Hillary about it. [*Laughter*] She has, I think, become your unofficial roving ambassador to the world.

But let me say I am profoundly honored to be here, honored to be on this continent, honored to be in this country, honored by the progress that has been made in these last few years in improving economic conditions, in improving political conditions. Thank you for what you have done, Mr. President, and to all of you.

Earlier today we talked about trade and investment. And President Museveni wants more of both, and he should. We talked about political cooperation and how we could work together for the future. And I listened very carefully to what the President said about the history of

Africa, the history of Uganda, the future, what mistakes had been made in the past.

It is as well not to dwell too much on the past, but I think it is worth pointing out that the United States has not always done the right thing by Africa. In our own time, during the cold war when we were so concerned about being in competition with the Soviet Union, very often we dealt with countries in Africa and in other parts of the world based more on how they stood in the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union than how they stood in the struggle for their own people's aspirations to live up to the fullest of their God-given abilities.

And of course, going back to the time before we were even a nation, European-Americans received the fruits of the slave trade. And we were wrong in that, as well. Although, I must say, if you look at the remarkable delegation we have here from Congress, from our Cabinet and administration, and from the citizens of America, there are many distinguished African-Americans who are in that delegation who are making America a better place today.

But perhaps the worst sin America ever committed about Africa was the sin of neglect and ignorance. We have never been as involved with you, in working together for our mutual benefit, for your children and for ours, as we should have been. So I came here to listen and to learn, to offer my help and friendship and partnership. And I came in the hope that because all these good people up here in the media came with me, and they're telling the American people back home what we're doing—

[*At this point, someone raised an umbrella to shade the President.*]

*The President.* That's okay—I came in the hope—it's not raining, is it? [*Laughter*] It's been cold and cloudy in Washington; I need a suntan. [*Laughter*] I came here in the hope that the American people would see you with new eyes, that they would see the children dance, see the children learning, hear the children singing, and say, we should be part of the same future.

Today I want to talk very briefly about that future for our children. President Museveni and Education Minister Mushega have made education a top priority, especially through the universal primary education program, and I loved hearing the children sing about it.

But your leaders have done more than talk and sing; they have acted. In 5 years, education spending in Uganda has tripled and teachers' salaries have gone up 900 percent. I hate to say that; back home, they'll wonder why I'm not doing better. And more importantly, you're getting something for your investment: better trained teachers, higher test scores, improved performance in school attendance from girls. I know that Kisowera School is proud that it graduates as many girls as boys, because we want all our children to learn so that all of them can succeed and make us all stronger. In most African countries, however, far fewer girls than boys enroll in school and graduate. One-half the primary-school-age children are not in school, and that has led in many nations to a literacy rate among adults below 50 percent.

Africa wants to do better. Uganda is doing better. The United States wants to help. Through a new initiative, the Education for Development and Democracy, we want to give \$120 million over the next 2 years to innovative programs to improve education. We want to widen the circle of educational opportunity, as is already happening here in Uganda. We want to make investments in primary education for those who will educate boys and girls, because that is critical to improving health, reducing poverty, raising the status of women, spurring economic growth. We want to promote girls' education with leadership training and scholarships, nutrition training, and mentoring. We also want to support efforts to reach out-of-school youths. This is a huge problem in parts of Africa where there are children who were soldiers and are now adrift and without hope.

Second, we want to help create community resource centers with schools that are equipped with computers linked to the Internet, along

with books and typewriters and radios for more long distance learning. We want them to be staffed by Africans and American Peace Corps volunteers.

Third, we want more new partnerships among African schools and between American and African schools, so that we can learn from and teach each other through the Internet. We do this a lot now at home.

Let me give you an idea of how it might work. A student here in Mukono could make up the first line of a story and type it into the Internet to a student in Accra, Ghana, who could then add a second line, and they could go on together, back and forth, writing a story. A teacher in New York could give five math problems to students in Kampala, and they could send the answers back. One of the very first partnerships will link this school, Kisowera, with the Pinecrest Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. I want more of them.

Fourth, we want to support higher education with the development of business, health care, science, math, and engineering courses. These are absolutely essential to give Africans the tools they need to compete and win in the new global economy, and we want to help do that.

Finally, we want to build ties between associations and institutions within Africa and in America so that groups in your nations and ours concerned with trade and investment, consumer issues, conflict resolution, or human rights can connect with distant counterparts and learn together and work together. This will empower citizens on both continents.

This initiative will help more Africans, all right, to start school, stay in school, and remain lifelong learners. But Americans will learn a great deal from it as well.

We also want to support your efforts in health and nutrition. Uganda has suffered so much from AIDS, but President Museveni launched a strong education campaign with frank talk, and he has made a huge difference, as have all of you who have worked to turn around the AIDS problem in Uganda. We will continue to combat it with global research and health care and prevention efforts.

But these efforts are also essential to combat malaria, an even greater killer of Africans. Nearly 3,000 children every day, a million each year, are lost to malaria. By weakening as well as killing people, malaria contributes to poverty

and undermines economic growth. Ninety percent of all malaria cases arise on the continent of Africa, but with increasing globalization we are all at risk. We now fund in the United States half the research on malaria, but we want to do more. This year we've committed \$16 million more to help African nations fight infectious diseases, including malaria, with an additional million dollars to the West African Malaria Center in Mali.

We also want to support good nutrition. There are troubling signs that without concerted efforts, Africa could face a major food and nutrition crisis in the coming years because of natural causes and social unrest. Children cannot learn if they are hungry. So we have proposed a food security initiative for Africa to ensure that more African families can eat good meals and more African farmers can make good incomes. Over the next 10 years, we want to stay with you and work at this. In the next 2 years, we propose to spend over \$60 million in Uganda, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, and Ethiopia to increase food production, enhance marketing, expand agricultural trade and investment.

I've learned a lot, since I've been here, about Ugandan bananas, Ugandan coffee. I will be an expert in all these matters when I go home.

I want you to understand again what I said at the beginning. We want to do these things

in education, in health care, and agriculture and nutrition because they will help you, because we want to see the light that is in these children's eyes forever, and in the eyes of all other children.

But make no mistake about it. The biggest mistake America ever made with Africa over the long run was neglect and lack of understanding that we share a common future on this planet of ours that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller. We do these things, yes, because we want to help the children. But we do it because we know it will help our children. For we must face the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century together. The next century, in a new millennium, will be the brightest chapter in all of human history if, but only if, it is right for all of our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, and his wife, Janet; Vice President Wandira Specioza Kazibwe; Prime Minister Kintu Musoke; Speaker of the House James Wapakabulo; and Minister of Education and Sports Amanywa Mushega. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Remarks in a Meeting With Village Business Owners and an Exchange With Reporters in Wanyange, Uganda

March 24, 1998

*The President.* You know, one thing I did not say in my remarks I think I should point out here, just because of the press here, in explaining this to people—all these people who get these loans, they don't have balance sheets, most of them. They don't have an asset and liability sheet for which they could get a normal commercial loan. What they have is proven skills and a good reputation for being responsible.

The repayment rate in this FINCA program and throughout all these programs across the world is 98 percent—98 percent of these loans are paid back on time. And that's why I say we do \$2 million—I wish we were doing \$100 million. I mean, I can't think of anything else

where we have invested money that has a 98 percent success rate. It's a stunning thing, just because of this fine woman and people like her all around the world. It's an amazing thing.

Good for you.

We want to see your baby.

*Hillary Clinton.* Will you bring your baby down?

*Janet Museveni.* How old is he?

*Betty Namugosa.* Two days.

*The President.* My boy, Bill. Oh, he's beautiful. Look at all this hair. I was completely bald until I was 2.

Your fourth child? Thank you for doing this. Why did you name this child after me?