

still a lot of people who hurt, too many who hurt. And the role of Government is to help those good folks realize their potential. Everybody has got potential. Everybody has got worth. Everybody has got value. And the role of this Government is to help those people realize their value and worth.

Today we've got Pamela Hedrick with us today. She can talk about this better than I can talk about it, because she's what we call a success story—somebody who is willing to share her story with the good folks here in the White House.

So, Pamela, thank you for coming. I look forward to hearing what you have to say.

[At this point, Pamela Hedrick made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all coming. For those of you who have got some influence up on Capitol Hill, remind them, it works. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Woodson, Sr., founder and president, National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise; and John Henry Gregory, founder and chief executive officer, The Enrichment Association of Community Healing (TEACH).

Videotaped Remarks to the African Growth and Opportunity Act Forum January 15, 2003

Thank you very much. And thank you, Ambassador Zoellick, for leading the United States delegation to this historic gathering. And thanks to the other U.S. Government officials, including Sam Bodman, Andrew Natsios, and others, for attending this forum.

I also thank you all for the honor of addressing this important meeting. I'm disappointed I'm not able to join you in person. I still look forward to visiting Africa later this year. I'm grateful to Prime Minister Jugnauth for hosting this forum. And to all the ministers and delegates and guests from our fellow AGOA nations, I extend the good wishes of the American people.

All of us share a common vision for the future of Africa. We look to the day when prosperity for Africa is built through trade and markets. We see a continent at peace, where the people of Africa obtain education and medical care and live in freedom. And we're making great progress, as shown by last month's free elections in Kenya.

Yet fulfilling this vision is the work of many years. It will require hard effort and true leadership and a rejection of some old ways. And in this great work, you will always have a partner in the United States.

Every nation that seeks peace faces a common enemy today in global terror. The recent attacks in Mombasa remind us that Africa is on the frontlines of the war against terror. All our citizens know the awful price of terror, and we will not rest until we have defeated terrorism in all its forms.

In this struggle, my country is grateful for the crucial support and friendship we have received from the nations of Africa. You've stood with us against a deadly threat. And we will stand with you to help bring an end to the terrible regional conflicts that bring so much suffering to innocent Africans, from Congo to Sudan to the Ivory Coast.

Safety from violence is the most basic condition of better lives for the people of Africa. And now and in years to come, we will continue working to expand trade between America and the African Continent.

AGOA shows the power of trade to lift people out of poverty. Exports from AGOA nations to the United States are rising dramatically, and the benefits are felt throughout the region. From Mauritius to Mali, AGOA is helping to reform old economies, creating new incentives for good governance and offering new hope for millions of Africans.

America is committed to building on the great success of AGOA. One important way we can do this is to give business the confidence to invest in Africa, knowing the law's benefits will continue long into the future. Therefore, I'm pleased to announce that I will ask the United States Congress to extend AGOA beyond 2008.

My administration strongly supported the AGOA II improvements, which are now helping African companies to sharply increase exports to the United States. As promised at the last AGOA meeting in Washington, the United States has opened offices in Botswana and Kenya and Ghana to ensure that African businesses can take advantage of new opportunities to sell goods abroad. Entrepreneurs in Africa often face difficulty complying with trade regulations and standards, and these offices are there to provide help. To assist African farmers in selling abroad, soon we will assign U.S. agricultural officials to each of these regional offices.

America is also working toward a free trade agreement with the Southern African Customs Union. Reaching that agreement involves complex and costly negotiations. To speed up those negotiations, my country will provide technical assistance to members of the Southern African Customs Union.

Wider trade is essential to economic growth, but our work does not end there. Many countries also need assistance to help spare their peoples from the extremes of poverty and disease. We are sending 1 million metric tons of food to help feed the 30 million people in southern Africa and the Horn facing starvation, and we are urg-

ing other nations to join us in meeting this urgent need.

The United States will also continue to lead the world in providing the resources to defeat HIV/AIDS. In addition, we have pledged to help poor countries get access to the emergency life-saving drugs they need to fight HIV/AIDS and other infectious epidemics. The AIDS pandemic has caused extraordinary loss and suffering across your continent and the world, and all governments have a moral obligation to confront it.

To help promote economic progress in Africa and elsewhere, the next budget I submit to Congress will include a 50-percent increase in our development assistance over the next 3 years. Money from our new Millennium Challenge Account will be directed to nations that encourage economic freedom, root out corruption, and respect the rights of their people. Through the New Partnership for African Development, many leaders across the continent have pledged their governments to these fundamental principles.

America has also created a special African Millennium Fund, administered by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Through this fund, we will support the construction of roads and bridges, canals, and other basic infrastructure that help make economic growth possible.

Africa's future depends as well on good teachers and schools and a chance for every child to study and learn, so America is devoting an additional \$200 million over 5 years to improve basic education and teacher training in Africa. Thanks to the leadership of Andrew Natsios, Administrator of our Agency of International Development, we have also created the Books for a Better Tomorrow program. This public/private effort will, in the weeks to come, deliver \$30 million worth of books and other school supplies to Africa.

For many years, America and the world looked to the continent of Africa and saw only its problems. That era has passed. In

this new century, the world is beginning to see the great potential of Africa and the goodness of its people.

Many of you gathered this week in Mauritius have helped to bring about this change. I share your confidence in Africa's future and in Africa's new generation of leaders. I pledge to you the friendship and support of the United States of America.

Thank you very much, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4 p.m. on January 13 in the Library at the White House for later transmission to the forum meeting in Port Louis, Mauritius. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth of Mauritius.

Remarks on the Michigan Affirmative Action Case *January 15, 2003*

The Supreme Court will soon hear arguments in a case about admissions policies and student diversity in public universities. I strongly support diversity of all kinds, including racial diversity in higher education. But the method used by the University of Michigan to achieve this important goal is fundamentally flawed.

At their core, the Michigan policies amount to a quota system that unfairly rewards or penalizes prospective students, based solely on their race. So tomorrow my administration will file a brief with the Court arguing that the University of Michigan's admissions policies, which award students a significant number of extra points based solely on their race and establishes numerical targets for incoming minority students, are unconstitutional.

Our Constitution makes it clear that people of all races must be treated equally under the law. Yet we know that our society has not fully achieved that ideal. Racial prejudice is a reality in America. It hurts many of our citizens. As a nation, as a government, and as individuals, we must be vigilant in responding to prejudice wherever we find it. Yet, as we work to address the wrong of racial prejudice, we must not use means that create another wrong and thus perpetuate our divisions.

America is a diverse country, racially, economically, and ethnically. And our institutions of higher education should reflect our diversity. A college education should teach respect and understanding and good will. And these values are strengthened when students live and learn with people from many backgrounds. Yet quota systems that use race to include or exclude people from higher education and the opportunities it offers are divisive, unfair, and impossible to square with the Constitution.

In the programs under review by the Supreme Court, the University of Michigan has established an admissions process based on race. At the undergraduate level, African American students and some Hispanic students and Native American students receive 20 points out of a maximum of 150, not because of any academic achievement or life experience but solely because they are African American, Hispanic, or Native American.

To put this in perspective, a perfect SAT score is worth only 12 points in the Michigan system. Students who accumulate 100 points are generally admitted, so those 20 points awarded solely based on race are often the decisive factor.