

Africa, by Africans. Primarily, they must develop this capacity. And they should be supported to develop this capacity so that we can prevent and we are prepared to prevent. Then you should be able to cope with these challenges, resolving the problems.

So I think the approach taken by President Bush were realistic, in the sense that you also do not want to see every problem, United States being called upon to be the answer of that problem. And of course, we—the backlash, also, in the sense that, at the same time, they also start blaming the United States, that they are rushing everywhere solving problems and, of course, reading through that to mean they have other interests and so on and so forth.

So I think that will lead the way of helping the people to solve their own problems, but of course, with the support of the United States with its huge capabilities in different areas. And walking together with the rest of the international community is

perhaps more important than just blaming the United States, saying, “Why didn’t you go in and solve the problem?” The problems and the solutions to those problems should not be taken away from the responsibilities of their action, should not be taken away from places where they’re taking place and the people in those places.

I think that is the best way I could—but we did talk about that. And we did talk about our own contribution and to how that can be enhanced. And the President is willing to support us—support has always been coming—so that we continue to move forward.

NOTE: The President’s news conference began at 12:20 p.m. at the Presidency—VIP Building. In his remarks, he referred to Jeannette Nyiramongi, wife of President Kagame; President Raul Castro Ruz of Cuba; and former Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

Remarks During a United States Embassy Dedication Ceremony in Kigali February 19, 2008

Well, thank you very much. Thank you. Please be seated—unless, of course, you don’t have a chair. [*Laughter*] Mr. President, thank you for joining us. Madam Kagame, we’re so thrilled you’re here. Laura and I are honored to be with you. I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps joining us as well.

I had a speech; I’m not going to give it. [*Laughter*] Guys like me always like to cut ribbons. There’s nothing more special than cutting the ribbon on a new Embassy, particularly in a country like Rwanda.

Rwanda has come—[*applause*—it’s amazing. You know, Laura and I just came from the—well, we came from a beautiful lunch with the President and the First Lady. But we went to the holocaust mu-

seum. It’s hard to believe that a country could recover so quickly from such a horrible moment. It’s hard to believe that there can be hope after a devastating period of time like that, and yet there is. And so cutting the ribbon here really is a chance for America to say, we stand with you as you hope for a better future.

Plus, I like dealing with strong leaders who care about the people. I like courage and compassion. And that’s what I believe your President has, courage and compassion. He cares deeply about the plight of the citizens of—[*applause*].

And I think when people get to know Americans, thanks to people who work here at this Embassy, they will find that we’re

a nation of courageous and compassionate people too.

So my first call is to thank our fellow citizens for working in Rwanda. And thanks for serving the United States of America. I hope you have as much pride as I do in saying, I represent America. And the reason I do so is because we are a compassionate people. And when we see suffering, we just don't sit around and talk about it; we act upon it. And when we see the hungry, we feed the hungry, not because of its—you know, it's like we want to establish undue influence; it's because we all believe we're children of God.

And so for those of you on the frontlines of saving lives with the malaria initiative, I say, thanks, good job, keep doing it. It's not that hard to spread out nets. It requires a government willing to cooperate with you. It's just not that difficult to figure out how to deal with the disease in which thousands of babies die. It's insecticides and nets and good strategies. And so thanks for working on that.

For those of you who are dealing with HIV/AIDS, you know, people often ask why did I decide to get involved? I couldn't stand by and watch a generation of people eradicated with something that we could help, you see. And so I want to thank my fellow citizens for saving lives. And gosh, I hope it makes you feel good; it certainly makes me feel good to know you're out there working hard. And so thanks for being a part of what I call a mission of mercy. And thanks for showing the good heart of America.

For the Rwandan citizens here, thanks for helping our Embassy go. We can't run our Embassies without the people from the host nations. And the Ambassador tells me that you're really fine people, and I know my fellow citizens thank you for working side by side with the people of the United States of America.

For those of you wearing the uniform, God bless you. There's nothing better than being the Commander in Chief of such an

outstanding group of men and women who selflessly serve a cause greater than themselves.

I do want to thank Michael and Lesley for their service. I do want to recognize our great Secretary of State. I thought for a minute you were going to name that road after Secretary Condoleezza Rice. [Laughter] When they're talking about great Americans, and they're going on and on and on, I was certain it was going to say "Rice Boulevard." [Laughter]

I do want to thank Cheryl Sim and her husband Richard. He's from Texas. Any other Texans that are here? Yes, there you go. You know what it's like. [Laughter] Pretty lucky deal to be called Texan, isn't it?

Finally, I do want to end by saying this: To whom much is given, much is required. That's a—Presidents must make decisions based upon certain principles that are timeless and universal. And that's one of the principles that stands in—it stands our Nation in good stead. We're a blessed nation, and I believe it is in our interests, our national interests and our moral interests, to help people like we're helping them here in Rwanda.

And so it's an honor to be here to cut the ribbon for this new Embassy. It's an honor to be in front of people who've got compassion in their hearts and efficiency on their minds and willing to do the right thing to get—to save lives. And it's an honor to be in, a great friend and ally, Rwanda. God bless you.

And now it's my honor to bring to the podium our President—your President and our ally, President Kagame.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. at the U.S. Embassy Kigali. In his remarks, he referred to Jeannette Nyiramongi, wife of President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Michael R. Arietti and his wife Lesley; and Deputy Chief of Mission

Cheryl Sim, U.S. Embassy Kigali. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Sec-

retary also included the remarks of President Kagame.

Remarks During a Meeting With President John Agyekum Kufuor of
Ghana in Accra, Ghana
February 20, 2008

President Bush. Thank you very much for your hospitality. Mr. President, thanks. First of all, it's an honor to be in your country, and it's an honor to be with you—[*inaudible*]. I don't know if the people of your country truly understand your standing in the international community, but you are one of the most respected international leaders. You have represented your country well; you have represented the continent of Africa well; and you represent certain basic values extremely well. So it's an honor to be with you today.

You're right; you and I are both finishing our term. But you forgot to say that we're both going to finish strong. [*Laughter*]

President Kufuor. That is a politician I talk about. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. You mentioned the Millennium Challenge Account. And I believe you're the first country on the continent of Africa to receive a grant. And we did so because we believe in supporting governments that fight corruption, invest in their children, invest in the health of their citizens, believe in marketplace economies, and that's exactly the way you've led your country.

And so ours is a—it's certainly not a gift. It is given in a cooperative spirit that—[*inaudible*]—people. And we believe that

it is in our national interest to promote freedom and democracy as well as help the citizenry make the—[*inaudible*]. And you've led the way, Mr. President. It's been very easy to support your Government.

And I appreciate you bringing up disease. There's no doubt in my mind that given some help, the Government of Ghana—led by you, sir—will eradicate malaria. It's going to take a lot of work and a lot of organizational skills and support from the international community, which you will have. And I predict to the people of Ghana that when you look back at President Kufuor's leadership, you'll say, this was the beginning of the end of the disease that affected so many lives of young children.

And I appreciate your leadership, my friend, and I want to thank you very much for this warm hospitality. I do want to thank the people of Ghana—at least those we've seen so far—for getting up early, lining the streets, and waving with such enthusiasm. It made us all feel great, and it's a part of the trip I've really been looking forward to. And so grateful for your hospitality. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10 a.m. at Osu Castle.