

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.

The President's News Conference With President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana in Accra February 20, 2008

President Kufuor. Welcome, Mr. President. I believe we agreed to expose ourselves to the ladies and gentlemen of the media. [Laughter] So we are ready for your questions.

President Bush. Let me have a—you want me to say something initially, Mr. President?

President Kufuor. Well, you may, Mr. President.

President Bush. See, he doesn't want to hear what I said upstairs again. But I do want to say a couple of comments. First of all, thank you very much for your warm hospitality. I am really happy to be in Ghana, as is my wife. This is her second time here, Mr. President. And I want to thank you for this grand welcome. And I appreciate your leadership.

Upstairs we talked about the Millennium Challenge Account. And it is a sizeable sum of taxpayers' money, aimed at helping you achieve your objectives, because your Government, led by you, is one that fights corruption and invests in its children, invests in the health of its citizens.

I'm oftentimes asked, "What difference does it make to America if people are dying of malaria in a place like Ghana or anywhere else?" It means a lot. It means a lot morally; it means a lot from a—it's in our national interests. After all, if you believe we're in an ideological struggle against extremism, which I do, the only way these people can recruit is when they find hopeless people. And there's nothing more hopeless than a mother losing a child needlessly to a mosquito bite.

We're going to—we spent time talking about trade, and I'm looking forward to meeting some of your businesses today, Mr. President. I believe firmly in fair trade, and I'm a strong supporter of AGOA. My predecessor put it in office; I've worked

to get it reauthorized. And it's an important part of your development. Your businesspeople are making decisions. Your businesspeople are employing people in your country. And your businesspeople should have access to markets.

I do want to announce today that—I am announcing a new initiative dealing with disease, and that is—our plan is to make it available—a total of \$350 million over 5 years—to target what they call neglected tropical diseases, such as hookworm or river blindness. This is all part of our initiative—whether it be on HIV/AIDS or malaria—to help save lives. And so, Mr. President, we're looking forward to working with you to help save lives and to bring hope to families.

I want to also announce today that we're going to devote nearly 17 dollars this—million dollars this year to help you on fighting malaria. I firmly believe your Government will do a fine job in getting mosquito nets and—to your people and medicines to your people. And so we're looking forward to helping you.

I also want to thank you for your leadership, Mr. President. As I said upstairs, I don't think a lot of people in Ghana—I hope a lot of people in Ghana understand this—what I'm about to say, but you're really one of the respected leaders around the world because of your firm commitment to peace. I thank you for your leadership here on the continent of Africa. My administration's strategy is to support African leaders to deal with Africa's problems.

I know there's a controversial subject brewing around that's not very well understood, and that's, why would America step—stand up what's called AFRICOM? Let me talk about a couple of points there,