

like Botswana and Ghana which roll back the causes of conflict and advance the frontiers of peace and prosperity.

As I said earlier, Africa's future is up to Africans. The people of Africa are ready to claim that future. And in my country, African Americans—including so many recent immigrants—have thrived in every sector of society. We've done so despite a difficult past, and we've drawn strength from our African heritage. With strong institutions and a strong will, I know that Africans can live their dreams in Nairobi and Lagos, Kigali, Kinshasa, Harare, and right here in Accra.

You know, 52 years ago, the eyes of the world were on Ghana. And a young preacher named Martin Luther King traveled here to Accra to watch the Union Jack come down and the Ghanaian flag go up. This was before the march on Washington or the success of the civil rights movement in my country. And Dr. King was asked how he felt while watching the birth of a nation, and he said, "It renews my conviction in the ultimate triumph of justice."

Now that triumph must be won once more, and it must be won by you. And I am particularly speaking to the young people all across Africa and right here in Ghana. In places like Ghana, young people make up over half of the population. And here is what you must know: The world will be what you make of it. You have the power to hold your leaders accountable and to build institutions that serve the people. You can serve in your communities and harness your energy and education to create new wealth and build new connections to the world. You can conquer disease and end conflicts and make change from the bottom

up. You can do that. Yes you can—[*ap-
plause*—]because in this moment, history is on the move.

But these things can only be done if all of you take responsibility for your future. And it won't be easy. It will take time and effort. There will be suffering and setbacks. But I can promise you this: America will be with you every step of the way, as a partner, as a friend. Opportunity won't come from any other place, though. It must come from the decisions that all of you make, the things that you do, the hope that you hold in your heart.

Ghana, freedom is your inheritance. Now it is your responsibility to build upon freedom's foundation. And if you do, we will look back years from now to places like Accra and say, this was the time when the promise was realized; this was the moment when prosperity was forged, when pain was overcome, and a new era of progress began. This can be the time when we witness the triumph of justice once more. Yes we can.

Thank you very much. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. at Accra International Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Speaker of Parliament Joyce Adeline Bamford-Addo, President John Evans Atta Mills, Vice President John Dramani Mahama, Chief Justice Georgina Wood, and Deputy Superintendent of Police Patience Quaye of Ghana. The Office of the Press Secretary also released French, Arabic, Portuguese, and Swahili language transcripts of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Tour of Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast, Ghana *July 11, 2009*

Michelle, the children, as well as other members of my family, just got an extraordinary tour of this castle. It is reminiscent of the trip I took to Buchenwald, because it reminds us of the capacity of human beings to commit great evil. One of the most striking things that I heard was that right above the dungeons in which male captives were kept was a church,

and that reminds us that sometimes we can tolerate and stand by great evil even as we think that we're doing good.

You know, I think it was particularly important for Malia and Sasha, who are growing up in such a blessed way, to be reminded that history can take very cruel turns, and hopefully, one of the things that was imparted to them

during this trip is their sense of obligation to fight oppression and cruelty wherever it appears, and that any group of people who are degrading another group of people have to be fought against with whatever tools we have available to us.

So obviously, it's a moving experience, a moving moment. We want to thank those who arranged for the tour and the people of Ghana for preserving this history. As painful as it is, I think that it helps to teach all of us that we have to do what we can to fight against the kinds of evils that, sadly, still exist in our world, not just on this continent but in every corner of the globe.

And I think, as Americans and as African Americans, obviously, there's a special sense that on the one hand this place was a place of profound sadness; on the other hand, it is here

where the journey of much of the African American experience began. And symbolically, to be able to come back with my family, with Michelle and our children, and see the portal through which the diaspora began, but also to be able to come back here in celebration with the people of Ghana of the extraordinary progress that we've made because of the courage of so many, Black and White, to abolish slavery and ultimately win civil rights for all people, I think, is a source of hope. It reminds us that as bad as history can be, it's also possible to overcome.

Thanks, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:57 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Departure from Accra, Ghana *July 11, 2009*

Hello, Ghana. Thank you. Thank you. I want to thank the people of Ghana for this extraordinary visit. Michelle and I have been greatly honored to be joined by President Mills and his lovely wife. They have been gracious hosts.

You know, your President and I have a lot in common. We're both lawyers; we're both former law professors; we're both new Presidents. We both like to think of ourselves as athletes. The difference is President Mills played hockey on the national team of Ghana, and I played basketball mostly in my backyard. *[Laughter]* But we both love sports.

We're both proud of serving our countries. And today I want to honor President Mills for his strong and thoughtful leadership, his devotion to democracy, and his commitment for the future of this nation.

Now, I also want to thank the magnificent welcoming committee, including the drummers and the dancers. Michelle and I and our daughters enjoyed it very much.

I want to recognize our Peace Corps volunteers who are here. You know, Ghana was the very first nation to host young people from the Peace Corps. And for decades, our two nations have formed vital partnerships and lasting

friendships because of this program. So all of you in the Peace Corps, you are doing an outstanding job, and we're proud of you.

As somebody whose father comes from Africa, obviously, this visit has been particularly meaningful for me. I've had a chance to discuss the future of Ghana but also the future of Africa with President Mills. I've spoken to the Parliament here in Ghana about America's commitment to supporting democracy and development. Michelle and I visited La General Hospital, where we met with beautiful women and their children who are getting the care that they need for a healthy start.

And finally, we toured Cape Coast Castle, a place for centuries where men, women, and children of this nation and surrounding areas were sold into slavery. I'll never forget the image of my two young daughters, the descendants of Africans and African Americans, walking through those doors of no return, but then walking back those doors of return. It was a remarkable reminder that while the future is unknowable, the winds always blow in the direction of human progress.

At each point of our visit here, I was reminded of the enduring bond between our nations.