

reform. Business has to be held accountable when they exploit undocumented workers. Individuals who are here illegally, they have to take responsibility by paying a fine and back taxes and learning English and going to the back of the line so that they take a legal path towards citizenship.

These are the essential elements of comprehensive reform, and I'm going to work with members of both parties to get it done. It may not be the easiest thing to do politically, but I also know that it is the right thing to do for our country.

In addition, we've sought to honor AAPI heritage, commemorating Hmong New Year, marking—

*Audience member.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Good to see you. [Laughter] I know, I remember you. [Laughter] How's your kid? She's doing good?

*Audience member.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Good, good, good. [Laughter] Didn't know we were going to have that little colloquy, but—[laughter].

We've marked Diwali in the White House, which was—[applause]. And with my appointments and nominations, I've worked to make sure that we've gotten a Government that is reflective of all America, including Americans of Asian descent and Pacific Islanders.

But I think it's also important to stress that while you confront some specific challenges to AAPI communities, everybody here understands that nobody is immune from the prob-

lems that our country is confronted with as a whole.

As small-business owners, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders know how important it is that we continue to spur growth after a long and brutal recession. As parents, everybody here is concerned about the quality of our education system and making college more affordable and accessible. As Americans, we want to make sure that we're giving our children the same opportunities that were given to us. And you know that it's up to each generation of Americans to pass on that legacy, to make sure that America is living up to its promise, a place where all things are possible if you're willing to put in a lot of hard work.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have helped to fulfill that promise for generations now. And because of the leadership of all of you in this room and people all across the country, I'm confident that that will continue into this century.

So thank you so much, everybody, for being here. God bless you. God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Father Vien The Nguyen, pastor, Mary Queen of Vietnam Church, New Orleans, LA; and entertainer Rekha "DJ Rekha" Malhotra. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, her husband Konrad Ng, and their daughters Suhaila and Savita Ng. The related proclamation of April 29 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Statement on Signing the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009 May 24, 2010

Today I signed into law the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009. The legislation crystallizes the commitment of the United States to help bring an end to the brutality and destruction that have been a hallmark of the LRA across several countries for two decades and to pursue a future of greater security and hope for the people of central Africa.

The Lord's Resistance Army preys on civilians, killing, raping, and mutilating the people of central Africa, stealing and brutalizing their children, and displacing hundreds of thousands of people. Its leadership, indicted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity, has no agenda and no purpose other than its own survival. It fills its ranks of fighters with the young boys and girls it abducts. By any

measure, its actions are an affront to human dignity.

Of the millions affected by the violence, each had an individual story and voice that we must not forget. In northern Uganda, we recall Angelina Atyam's 14-year-old daughter, whom the LRA kidnaped in 1996 and held captive for nearly 8 years, one of 139 girls abducted that day from a boarding school. In southern Sudan, we recall John Lobo, a father, a husband, a brother, a local humanitarian assistance worker killed in an ambush while helping others in 2003. Now in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, the people of Dungu and of Obo too have their stories of loss and pain.

We mourn those killed. We pray for those abducted to be freed and for those wounded to heal. We call on the ranks of the LRA to disarm and surrender. We believe that the leadership of the LRA should be brought to justice.

I signed this bill today recognizing that we must all renew our commitments and strengthen our capabilities to protect and assist civilians caught in the LRA's wake, to receive those that surrender, and to support efforts to bring the LRA leadership to justice. The bill reiterates U.S. policy and our commitment to work toward a comprehensive and lasting resolution to the conflict in northern Uganda and other affected areas, including northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, southern Sudan, and the Central African Republic. We will do so in partnership with regional governments and multilateral efforts.

I commend the Government of Uganda for its efforts to stabilize the northern part of the country, for actively supporting transitional

and development assistance, and for pursuing reintegration programs for those who surrender and escape from the LRA ranks.

I also want the governments of other LRA-affected countries to know that we are aware of the danger the LRA represents and we will continue to support efforts to protect civilians and to end this terrible chapter in central African history. For over a decade, the United States has worked with others to respond to the LRA crisis. We have supported peace process and reconciliation, humanitarian assistance and regional recovery, protection of civilians and reintegration for former combatants, and have supported regional governments as they worked to provide for their people's security. Going forward, we will call on our partners as we all renew our efforts.

I congratulate Congress for seizing on this important issue, and I congratulate the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have mobilized to respond to this unique crisis of conscience. We have heard from the advocacy organizations, nongovernmental organizations, faith-based groups, humanitarian actors who lack access, and those who continue to work on this issue in our own Government. We have seen your reporting, your web sites, your blogs, and your video postcards. You have made the plight of the children visible to us all. Your action represents the very best of American leadership around the world, and we are committed to working with you in pursuit of the future of peace and dignity that the people of who have suffered at the hands of the LRA deserve.

NOTE: S. 1067, approved May 24, was assigned Public Law No. 111-172.

## Letter to the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue May 24, 2010

*To the participants of the U.S.-China Strategic & Economic Dialogue,*

Last summer, I was proud to welcome many of you to the White House as our two countries launched this Strategic and Economic Dialogue. I want to thank President Hu, Vice

Premier Wang, State Councilor Dai, and the entire Chinese delegation for their hospitality in hosting this year's meeting.

I am pleased that our delegation in Beijing is led by two outstanding members of my Cabinet—Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner—and that