

it. Democracy, however, neither begins nor ends with elections. Now is the time for Nigeria's leaders and its people to come together and build the future that they deserve, a multi-party democracy that addresses the aspirations of all Nigerians, especially its youth, who did so much to make the recent elections a success and who will define the nation's future.

As Africa's most populous country, Nigeria can show what is possible when people of dif-

ferent parties, ethnicities, and faith backgrounds come together to seek peace, provide for their families, and give their children a better future. Today, Nigerians have an historic opportunity to move forward together and make their nation into a model for Africa. As I told President Jonathan, I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Nigeria so that this and future generations of Nigerians can live in peace, democracy, and prosperity.

## Remarks at a New York City Fire Department Firehouse in New York City May 5, 2011

Well, listen, the main reason I came here is because I heard the food's pretty good. [Laughter]

But to the commissioner, to Mayor Giuliani—who obviously performed heroic acts almost 10 years ago—but most of all, to all of you, I wanted to just come up here to thank you.

This is a symbolic site of the extraordinary sacrifice that was made on that terrible day almost 10 years ago. Obviously, we can't bring back the friends that were lost, and I know that each and every one of you not only grieve for them, but have also, over the last 10 years, dealt with their family, their children, tried to give them comfort, tried to give them support.

Well, what happened on Sunday because of the courage of our military and the outstanding work of our intelligence sent a message around the world, but also sent a message here back home, that when we say we will never forget, we mean what we say. And our commitment to making sure that justice is done was something that transcended politics, transcended party; it didn't matter which administration was in, it didn't matter who was in charge, we were going to make sure that the perpetrators of that horrible act, that they received justice.

So it's some comfort, I hope, to all of you to know that when those guys took those extraordinary risks going into Pakistan, that they were doing it in part because of the sacrifices that

were made in this State. They were doing it in the name of your brothers that were lost.

And finally, let me just say that although 9/11 obviously was a high-water mark of courage for the New York Fire Department and a symbol of the sacrifice, you guys are making sacrifices every single day. It doesn't get as much notoriety, it doesn't get as much attention, but every time you run into a burning building, every time that you are saving lives, you're making a difference. And that's part of what makes this city great, and that's part of what makes this country great.

So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of the American people for the sacrifices that you make every single day. And I just want to let you know that you're always going to have a President and an administration who's got your back the way you've got the backs of the people of New York over these last many years.

So God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

And with that, I'm going to try some of that food. All right? Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:29 a.m. at Engine Company 54, Ladder Company 4, and Battalion 9 firehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Salvatore J. Cassano, fire commissioner, New York City Fire Department; and former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City.