

We appreciate your support in bringing democracy in Thailand back on track. I hope you continue to do so as Thailand's democracy still faces many challenges ahead.

In terms of economic relations, as the President and I have discussed today, we will continue to build on a strong foundations in expanding our trade and investment to promote growth and create jobs. The world is changing fast, and only through trust, partnership, can we ensure peace and prosperity for both nations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, for me there is no better way to launch a celebration of our 180th anniversary of relations in 2013 than with this Presidential visit today. May I invite all of you to join me in toast: To the good health and success of President Barack Obama and to the long-lasting friendship between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Thailand.

Cheers.

[*At this point, Prime Minister Yinglak offered a toast.*]

President Obama. Well, good evening, everyone. Madam Prime Minister, distinguished guests, and ladies and gentlemen, my visit to Thailand is far too brief, but even in my short stay, I've already felt the extraordinary warmth and kindness and hospitality of the people of Thailand. Everyone knows that this is the Land of Smiles, and I have felt it everywhere that I've gone.

I've also felt the dignity and strength of this country and its people: the tranquility and peace that I felt as I had the privilege of walking around the sacred grounds of Wat Pho and gazing up at the Reclining Buddha; the compassion and wisdom that you felt in the presence of His Majesty the King, who has devoted his reign to the welfare and development of his

people. We've seen it in the resilience that has pushed this Nation forward, most recently, in the face of devastating floods.

And most of all, I think we all feel here tonight the unique friendship between our peoples. His Majesty once said that since he was born in America, the United States is "half my motherland." And we are just as proud of all the Thai Americans who enrich our country. In fact, I was mentioning to His Majesty that my friend, Ladda Tammy Duckworth, just became the first Thai American woman ever to be elected to our Congress, and she's from my home State of Illinois, so I'm especially proud of her.

Everything that I've felt—your dignity, your resilience, your friendship, your warmth—that is the foundation of our alliance. It's why you were the first Asian nation to reach out to America after we won our Independence. It's why in Asia, to this day, we can say Thailand is our oldest friend. And we are extraordinarily proud of that friendship, and we are especially pleased to see the excellent leadership that, Madam Prime Minister, you are providing as you continue this country's path of democracy, freedom, and development.

So I want to propose a toast: To the friendship between our peoples, to the strength of our alliance, to the peace and prosperity that we seek, and to Their Majesties the King and the Queen.

Chai yo!

[*President Obama offered a toast.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. at the Government House. In his remarks, he referred to King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand; and U.S. Representative-elect L. Tammy Duckworth.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Thein Sein of Burma in Rangoon, Burma November 19, 2012

President Thein Sein. First of all, the entire people of Myanmar, including myself, join me

in welcoming Your Excellency, Mr. President—the first-ever visit of a U.S. President to

Myanmar. And it is in Myanmar—[inaudible]—our bilateral relationship.

In fact, Myanmar established diplomatic relations with the United States since—in the year 1947, a year before our—the year before our independence. The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Myanmar, and our countries have long history and have maintained friendly relations.

For the first 20 years, there were some difficulties and obstacles in our bilateral relations. But however, when President Obama took office in the United States, and because of the visions—a reengagement policy of the President, as well as the efforts of the Secretary of State and the contributions of the Ambassador—our bilateral relations have been progressing steadily. And then, in this regard, I would like to reiterate our commitment to continue cooperation to strengthen our bilateral relations in the years to come.

In this regard, we would like to say here—we would like to reiterate that based on mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation, we will move forward to further strengthen and promote our bilateral relations with the United States.

During our discussion, we also reached agreements that—for development of democracy in Myanmar and for promoting of human rights to be in—of international standard. We will continue to cooperate with the United States to—for the capacity buildings of our officials and for development of social—[inaudible]—in the area of social—[inaudible]—such as education and health—public health care services for the people of Myanmar.

In this regard, I would like to—we will redouble our efforts that the discussion—the discussions that we had will bring benefit for the people of Myanmar and bring prosperity to our country. And in this regard, we will continue to work with—as partner with the United States.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to President Obama's visions and the support for, as well as the efforts of—excellent efforts of Secretary Clinton, as well as the responsible offi-

cial from the State Department which have paved the way for promotion of our bilateral relations and cooperation between our two countries.

I want to use the exact word used by the President Obama. We will continue to move forward. We will move forward. [Laughter]

President Obama. Well, I just want to thank the President for hosting us here today and the incredible hospitality that everybody here has shown us so far. And I'll be very brief because I know that I'll be giving a speech later and have an opportunity to share my vision further with the people here.

But I just want to share that we had a very constructive conversation. I shared with President Thein Sein our belief that the process of reform that he is taking is one that will move this country forward. The steps that he's already taken for democratization, elections, the release of prisoners of conscience, a commitment to work with us on a human rights dialogue all can unleash the incredible potential of this beautiful country.

And I shared with him the fact that I recognize that this is just the first steps on what will be a long journey. But we think that a process of democratic reform and economic reform here in Myanmar that has been begun by the President is one that can lead to incredible development opportunities here. And we are committed to continuing to work very hard to try to strengthen the bilateral relationship so that we can promote progress that will be good not only for this country, but for the region and for the international community.

And the last point I would just make is, we appreciate this concrete cooperation that the President has announced with respect to non-proliferation issues, including the IAEA additional protocol, because I think we share an interest in trying to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. And that is obviously a significant security concern for the United States, but also for the world. And so we very much appreciate that step forward.

So, Mr. President, thank you for your hospitality. I look forward to not only a good visit to-

day, but hopefully, another visit sometime in the future.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. at the Parliament Building. In his remarks, Presi-

dent Thein Sein referred to U.S. Ambassador to Burma Derek J. Mitchell. President Thein Sein spoke in Burmese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at the Residence of Member of Parliament and National League for Democracy Party Leader Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma in Rangoon *November 19, 2012*

Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi. I would like to say how happy I am to receive President Obama in my country and in my house. The friendship between our two countries is of long standing. The United States has been staunch in its support of the democracy movement in Burma, and we are confident that this support will continue through the difficult years that lie ahead. I say difficult because the most difficult time in any transition is when we think that success is in sight. Then we have to be very careful that we are not lured by a mirage of success and that we are working towards genuine success for our people and for the friendship between our two countries.

I believe that we have been able to discuss our various concerns openly and that as a result of the President's visit to this country, the relations between our countries can only progress in the right direction.

I intend fully to keep in touch with the United States Government as far as possible and to make sure that we always liaise one another on the most important matters.

Now, I'm told I had 3 minutes, and I think this is about 3 minutes. So thank you all for coming. And I leave the floor to President Obama.

President Obama. Well, I'll try to be pretty brief, although not as eloquent. I was honored to be the first President to welcome Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to the White House. I'm proud to be the first American President to visit this spectacular country, and I am very pleased that one of my first stops is to visit with an icon of democracy who's inspired so many people, not just in this country, but all around the world.

I especially want to thank Aung San Suu Kyi for welcoming me to her home. Here, through

so many difficult years, is where she displayed such unbreakable courage and determination. It's here where she showed that human freedom and dignity cannot be denied.

Today marks the next step in a new chapter between the United States and Burma. Last year, in response to early flickers of reform, I asked Secretary Clinton to visit this country and explore with Aung San Suu Kyi and the Government whether the United States could empower reform efforts and begin a new relationship between our peoples.

In the year since, we've seen some very encouraging progress, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release and election to Parliament, the release of political prisoners, the lifting of restrictions on the press, and new laws to expand labor rights and eliminate the use of child soldiers. And at my direction, the United States has responded to support these reforms, including the easing of sanctions.

Now, as a former legislator myself, I followed your role in the new Parliament with interest and admiration. Real democracy involves having different branches of government check and balance each other, and I applaud your efforts in that regard, particularly as the head of the Committee of the Rule of Law.

In my discussions here in Yangon, our goal is to sustain the momentum for democratization. That includes building credible government institutions, establishing rule of law, ending ethnic conflicts, and ensuring that the people of this country have access to greater education, health care, and economic opportunity.

And I want to make a pledge to the people of this country that I am confident we can keep, and that is, if we see continued progress towards reform, our bilateral ties will grow