

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

stronger and we will do everything we can to help ensure success.

I'm so happy, by the way, to be joined by Secretary Clinton. This is her last foreign trip that we're going to take together, and it is fitting that we have come here to a country that she has done so much to support.

Where did Hillary go? Where is she?

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.
Oh, I'm right here.

President Obama. There she is.

So I could not be more grateful, not only for your service, Hillary, but also for the powerful message that you and Aung San Suu Kyi send about the importance of women and men ev-

erywhere embracing and promoting democratic values and human rights.

So again, I want to thank you, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, for your extraordinary hospitality and grace; the power of your example, which has been an inspiration to people all around the world, including myself. Clearly, you will be playing a key role in your country's future for many years to come as Burma seeks the freedom and the prosperity and the dignity that not only the people of this country deserve, but people all around the world deserve.

So thank you for your inspiring message.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m.

Remarks at the University of Yangon in Rangoon November 19, 2012

Thank you. *Myanmar Nainngan, mingalaba!* [Laughter] I am very honored to be here at this university and to be the first President of the United States of America to visit your country.

I came here because of the importance of your country. You live at the crossroads of East and South Asia. You border the most populated nations on the planet. You have a history that reaches back thousands of years and the ability to help determine the destiny of the fastest growing region of the world.

I came here because of the beauty and diversity of your country. I have seen just earlier today the golden stupa of Shwedagon and have been moved by the timeless idea of *metta*—the belief that our time on this Earth can be defined by tolerance and by love. And I know this land reaches from the crowded neighborhoods of this old city to the homes of more than 60,000 villages, from the peaks of the Himalayas, the forests of Karen State, to the banks of the Irrawaddy River.

I came here because of my respect for this university. It was here at this school where opposition to colonial rule first took hold. It was here that Aung San edited a magazine before leading an independence movement. It was here that U Thant learned the ways of the world before guiding it at the United Nations. Here, scholarship thrived during the last cen-

tury, and students demanded their basic human rights. Now your Parliament has at last passed a resolution to revitalize this university, and it must reclaim its greatness, because the future of this country will be determined by the education of its youth.

I came here because of the history between our two countries. A century ago, American traders, merchants, and missionaries came here to build bonds of faith and commerce and friendship. And from within these borders in World War II, our pilots flew into China, and many of our troops gave their lives. Both of our nations emerged from the British Empire, and the United States was among the first countries to recognize an independent Union of Burma. We were proud to found an American Center in Rangoon and to build exchanges with schools like this one. And through decades of differences, Americans have been united in their affection for this country and its people.

Above all, I came here because of America's belief in human dignity. Over the last several decades, our two countries became strangers. But today I can tell you that we always remained hopeful about the people of this country, about you. You gave us hope, and we bore witness to your courage.

We saw the activists dressed in white visit the families of political prisoners on Sundays