

I continue to be concerned about the other documents that he may have. That's part of the reason why we'd like to have Mr. Snowden in custody. But what I think we're going to continue to do is to make sure that we are following the various channels that are well established and the rules that are well established to try to get this thing done.

In the meantime, we've got other business to do. For example, we're here in Africa, and I don't want people to forget why we're here.

[*President Sall spoke in English.*]

*President Sall.* Right.

*President Obama.* The fact of the matter is, is that Africa oftentimes is not focused on by our press and our leadership back home unless there's a crisis. And part of the reason why we want to focus here, starting in Senegal, is to make sure people understand there is enormous potential here. Six of the ten fastest growing economies in the world are happening right here in Africa. You talk about President Xi. China is paying a lot of attention to Africa; Brazil, Turkey, India are heavily invested in trying to expand trade and commerce with Africa. We have economic and security interests that are critical. We're seeing countries like Senegal that are—have sustained democracy and have sustained peace for many years, who want to partner with us, who are making sacrifices in places like Mali to maintain regional stability.

And so I just want to make sure that we don't lose focus here. The reason I came to Africa is because Africa is rising. And it is in the United States interests—not simply in Africa's interests—that the United States don't miss the opportunity to deepen and broaden the partnerships and potential here. This is going

to be a continent that is on the move. It is young. It is vibrant and full of energy. And there's a reason why a lot of other countries around the world are spending a lot of time here.

We historically have been an enormous provider of development aid to Africa, food, medicine. But what I want us to do is to have a shift in paradigm, where we start focusing on trade, development, partnerships where we see ourselves as benefiting and not simply giving to—in the relationship with Africa. And I think that's what people like President Sall are looking forward to. All right.

Thank you very much. That was a very long answer.

*Moderator.* Yes, the press conference is—

*The President.* But these are big questions you guys are asking.

*President Sall.* Thank you.

*Moderator.* Thank you very much for being here. We wish you a good stay. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11 a.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, the President referred to Maimouna Ndour Ep Faye and Aissatou Padane, participants in the White House Young African Leaders Forum held in August 2010; Edith Windsor, defendant, *United States v. Windsor*; former White House Counsel Robert F. Bauer and Benjamin L. Ginsberg, partner, Patton Boggs LLP, in their capacity as Cochairs of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration; and 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney. President Sall referred to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Some reporters spoke in French, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## Remarks During a Meeting With African Judicial Leaders in Dakar June 27, 2013

Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chief Justice, for your service here in Senegal, for your powerful words about the work that brings us here together: the recognition that

strong democracies depend on strong institutions. And that includes an independent judiciary system and respect for the rule of law.

I have to say that it's a great honor to be with such a distinguished group of Justices from across Africa. Some of you may know, I am a lawyer myself. My grandmother very much wanted me to be a judge instead of going into politics, so even though I disappointed her by going into politics, at least now she knows that a group of judges are willing to meet with me even if I'm not one myself. So she would be happy about that.

First and foremost, this is an opportunity for me to salute the fine work that all of you are doing. These men and women, and the institutions that they represent are known for their integrity, their determination to deliver justice fairly, sometimes in the face of threats and sometimes in the face of intimidation. But they understand that what makes for a strong democracy includes a strong judiciary: one that's independent from politics; one that operates transparently so that citizens can have confidence that the process is free from undue influences; accountability, because even judges are not above the law.

And of course, on a much more basic level, judicial systems need funding to do their jobs. So I wanted to have this meeting here as part of my first full day in Africa on this trip because I believe that the rule of law is a foundation for governance and also a foundation for human rights and economic growth. It's a pillar of our democracy.

Societies are stronger and more stable when there are checks and balances on government power, when citizens know that their rights will be protected from arbitrary or capricious actions, when they have peaceful recourse when they've been on the receiving end of injustice.

Rule of law is what upholds universal human rights. Sometimes, when nobody else will, a judge can stand up on behalf of someone. And in the United States, one of the basic principles that we strongly believe in is, is that the judi-

ciary is most important when it comes to minority rights because the political process oftentimes will recognize the desires of the majority. The question is, when people are on the unpopular side of an issue or a member of a minority group, where can they seek recourse? And oftentimes, it's in the courts.

So at our—at their best, our courts are venues where justice and equality can be realized for women and children and the poor, for marginalized groups, for victims of discrimination, victims of violence. But as I mentioned earlier, I think it's also a critical ingredient for economic development and prosperity in Africa.

I mentioned to President Sall of Senegal, who I was visiting with before I came here, that trade and investment around the world increasingly flows to places where there are rules and regulations that are fair and predictable, where assets and intellectual property are protected. And the courts play a vital role in that process.

So I wanted to have this meeting to hear from you about how we can be helpful and encouraging in building even stronger judiciaries and systems of law around the continent. The United States is proud to work with partners across Africa to strengthen independent judiciaries and help prepare future jurists. So I want to hear your thoughts, your challenges, and I want to hear from you how you think the United States can be most helpful in continuing the work that you were already doing.

So again, thank you for your hospitality, Mr. Chief Justice. Thanks to all of you who have, in some cases, traveled from a very long way to be here, and with that, let me give the press a moment to depart so we can have a good conversation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:08 p.m. at La Cour Supreme. In his remarks, he referred to Chief Justice Papa Oumar Sakho of Senegal.

## Remarks Following a Tour of the Maison des Esclaves on Goree Island, Senegal *June 27, 2013*

Hey! Well, the—I want to thank the President of Senegal, but also the mayor of Goree and the museum curator here. Obviously, it's a very powerful moment whenever I can travel with my family, but especially for Michelle and Malia and my mother-in-law to be able to come here and to fully appreciate the magnitude of the slave trade, to get a sense, in a very intimate way, of the incredible inhumanity and hardship that people faced before they made the Middle Passage and that crossing.

And I think more than anything, what it reminds us of is that we have to remain vigilant when it comes to the defense of people's human rights, because I'm a firm believer that humanity is fundamentally good, but it's only good when good people stand up for what's right. And this is a testament to, when we're

not vigilant in defense of what's right, what can happen.

And so it's always powerful for me to visit countries outside of the United States generally, but obviously, for an African American—and an African American President—to be able to visit this site, I think, gives me even greater motivation in terms of the defense of human rights around the world. All right?

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Macky Sall of Senegal; Mayor Augustin Senghor of Goree, Senegal; and Eloi Coly, museum curator, Maison des Esclaves de Goree. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

## Remarks at a Meeting With Civil Society Leaders on Goree Island *June 27, 2013*

Well, let me just say thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me. We've had a wonderful visit here in Senegal, and I had good opportunity to discuss a range of issues with President Sall this morning.

And obviously, it was very powerful to be visiting the Slave Museum here in Goree as a reminder of the potential for man's inhumanity to man, but also as a reminder that we all have to continually be vigilant on behalf of human rights.

The leaders—just for the press—the leaders who are gathered here today, these are all representatives of civil society, which is incredibly strong here in Senegal. And last year, when there were some significant questions as to whether Senegal's democracy would continue to represent the will of the people, it is leaders like these that were able to maintain the pressure and to maintain the focus on the peaceful transfer of power and the continuation of democratic traditions here in Senegal. And it's a re-

minder that democracy is not just about election day.

Democracy and good governance involves the need for transparency and accountability on the part of government, but also active citizens who are monitoring what the government is doing, that are speaking out. It involves a free press, freedom of assembly, rule of law. And it also involves organizations like this that aren't just working politically, but are also working to increase youth employment, helping to empower women, making sure that children and other vulnerable populations are protected. That's all part of the democratic process.

And I think that history shows that those countries that enjoy good governance, respect human rights, also end up having better economic growth, greater social stability and cohesion.

And so I just want to say, again, thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm