

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

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looking forward to hearing how we can be more helpful in forging stronger ties between the United States and Senegal, but also to continue to encourage the kinds of empowerment that all of you represent; and that a particular focus of mine is how do we encourage more young people to get involved.

So, for example, Aissatou here attended the Young African Leaders Forum that we held at the White House a couple of years ago, and we're going to be talking during the

course of this trip about how we can continue to expand and recruit more outstanding young African leaders to network and participate.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:46 p.m. at the Goree Institute. In his remarks, he referred to Aissatou Padane, a participant in the White House Young African Leaders Forum held in August 2010.

Statement on National HIV Testing Day

June 27, 2013

Today is National HIV Testing Day, when we encourage people across the United States to get tested. Early detection and treatment for HIV saves lives, and yet over half of adults in the United States have never been tested. Nearly one in five people living with HIV in this country doesn't know his or her status. That delays treatment, increases the risk of transmission, and sets us back in our fight against the epidemic.

Getting an HIV test is easier and faster than ever. And this past April, the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommended that everyone between the ages of 15 and 65 get screened for HIV as part of their routine health care. That means, under the Affordable

Care Act, new health care plans will be required to cover HIV testing without any additional out-of-pocket costs.

But more Americans still need to decide to take the test. We know from experience here at home and around the world that HIV testing opens the door to treatment, reduces the spread of the virus, and helps people lead longer, healthier lives. That's why, on a trip to Africa in 2006, Michelle and I were tested for HIV, because there should be no shame or stigma associated with knowing your status. And if we each do our part by getting tested and encourage our friends and family to do the same, then we will move closer to an AIDS-free generation.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Anthony R. Foxx as Secretary of Transportation

June 27, 2013

I am pleased that the Senate today voted unanimously to confirm Anthony Foxx as the next Secretary of Transportation. Anthony knows firsthand that investing in our roads, bridges, and transit systems is vital to creating good jobs and

ensuring American businesses can grow and compete in a 21st-century global economy. I welcome Anthony to my team, and I look forward to working with him as we aim to modernize the infrastructure that powers our economy.

Statement on Senate Passage of Immigration Reform Legislation

June 27, 2013

Today, with a strong bipartisan vote, the United States Senate delivered for the Ameri-

can people, bringing us a critical step closer to fixing our broken immigration system once and