

someone else down, but can be enhanced by lifting somebody else up; that they don't have to be defined in opposition to others, but rather by a belief in liberty and equality and justice and fairness.

And the embrace of these principles as universal doesn't weaken my particular pride, my particular love for America, it strengthens it. My belief that these ideals apply everywhere doesn't lessen my commitment to help those who look like me or pray as I do or pledge allegiance to my flag. But my faith in those principles does force me to expand my moral imagination and to recognize that I can best serve my own people, I can best look after my own daughters, by making sure that my actions seek

what is right for all people and all children and your daughters and your sons.

This is what I believe: that all of us can be coworkers with God. And our leadership and our governments and this United Nations should reflect this irreducible truth.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:29 a.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Peter Thomson, President, 71st Session of the U.N. General Assembly; and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria in New York City September 20, 2016

President Obama. It's a great pleasure to once again meet with President Buhari of Nigeria, along with his delegation. Nigeria is one of the largest, most populous, and most important countries not just in sub-Saharan Africa, but in the world. And I am very pleased that we have been able to build a very strong working relationship with President Buhari as he's come in and initiated some very bold efforts at reform.

On the security front, real progress has been made in coordinating regionally to restrict Boko Haram, a brutal organization affiliated with ISIL that has killed an enormous number of people and have decimated communities there. Because of President Buhari's leadership, he has been able to refocus the Nigerian military. We are coordinating carefully. And we discussed here today additional ways that we can make further progress not only in destroying this branch of ISIL, but also to make sure that the people in this region are able to recover from the devastation of Boko Haram's occupation.

That includes making sure that humanitarian aid is getting in. There is real danger of famine and hardship in these areas because

farmers were not able to grow crops and engage in traditional agricultural practices. And so we had a discussion about how we can work together to ensure an international response and then move forward to help these communities rebuild.

We also had a discussion about how, during a difficult time for Nigeria given its role as an oil exporter, we are looking to help in any ways that we can to facilitate a reduction of conflict in the Niger Delta region, a major oil-producing region, but one that has been marred by a number of militant organizations that have expropriated or siphoned off oil revenues. And the President, I think, wisely, is heading up a delegation to bring various stakeholders together and try to make progress on that front. We want to be helpful in any way that we can.

We discussed broader issues of development. And the President is taking some very bold economic reforms, including allowing for flexibility in exchange rates, refocusing on agricultural production. And we pledged to offer all the assistance that we can in those areas.

And as the President is trying to stamp out corruption, to recover external funds that may have been illegally obtained and are sitting in

bank accounts around the world, as he continues to work to make sure that the security forces inside of Nigeria are abiding by professional and human rights standards, what we've pledged is, is that we will partner in any ways that we can to be helpful.

And in the meantime, I also want to thank the President for having been a great partner with us on a range of international challenges of great importance, including around issues like climate change and dealing with pollutants like hydrofluorocarbons, where Nigeria has actually been an excellent partner.

So we wish President Buhari well. He's going to be President longer than I am. [Laughter] But that gives us a sense of urgency to make sure that we've done everything we can to put in place the framework for cooperation and partnership for many years to come.

Mr. President.

President Buhari. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We have—when I say we, I mean Nigeria—benefited tremendously from the United States understanding and cooperation and backing politically and security-wise. Politically, after 16 years and 8 successive government of the other party, it is the United States and Europe that made it absolutely clear that elections should be held according to Nigerian Constitution. That really stabilized the polity in Nigeria and help changing in Government.

And when we came back, a major problem we identified and we mentioned during our campaign is about security, economy, and corruption. And in each of the three identified objectives, the United States help us: training our military, helping with hard- and software.

That's why we are very successful in the northeast, where Boko Haram was holding clearly 14 out of 770—[inaudible]—and they declared a caliphate. Now they are not holding a single one, and they are reduced to—what do you call—using improvised explosive devices and attacking soft targets. And then the training team we received from the United States and the hard- and software help has helped to stabilize it. And in the south, the militants there, we are being helped again with intelligence and advice and training, and we believe soon it will be okay.

Developing the economy, we made the mistake of being a mono-economy. Until now, we find out footing the bills on food importation will be difficult. So we want into agriculture. We are very grateful for the advice we have been receiving.

So I don't think Nigeria can thank the United States enough, in terms of helping us in the security and the economy. So we are really very grateful, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Geoffrey Onyema of Nigeria. And you wish him well in his retirement.

President Buhari. And I wish you a peaceful retirement. [Laughter]

President Obama. Thank you so much. Appreciate it, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in Conference Room C at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations in New York City September 20, 2016

Well, good afternoon, everyone. And thank you, Mr. Secretary-General, as always, for your kind words and your welcome. For 8 years, this luncheon has followed a long speech by me. For 8 years, it's forced me to be

brief and not subject you to a second long speech. And after 8 years, I finally figured out the Secretary-General's plan. It keeps me brief to—and I will follow that plan here today.