

But he kept at it. And as he told me, “No matter what you’re trying to do, you need the motive in your mind that you want to help your society move forward.” He was doing well, but he was also trying to do good.

And that’s what this is all about. That’s the work that we’ve got to carry on. This is a U.S.-Africa Business Forum. This is not charity. All of you should be wanting to make money and create great products and great services and be profitable and do right by your investors. But the good news is, in Africa right now, if you are doing well, you can also be doing a lot of good. And if we keep that in mind, if we do more to buy from each other and sell from each other, if we do more to bring down barriers to doing business, if we do more to strengthen infrastructure and innovation and governance, I know we’re going to be able to move our societies and economies forward. And that will be good, not just for Africa, but it will be good for the United States and good for the world.

We want Africa as a booming, growing, thriving market, where we can do business,

where you’ve got a young population that is surging. And although this will be the last time I participate in the U.S. Business Forum—U.S.-Africa Business Forum as President, I think you should anticipate that I will be continuing to work with all of you in the years to come, and I know that Penny has done a great job in working to institutionalize these efforts. And when we’ve got great partners like Mike Bloomberg and the Bloomberg Foundation involved in this, I have no doubt that this is just going to keep on growing, and we’re going to look back and say, we were on to something.

Thank you so much, everybody. Appreciate it. Keep up the great work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City, in his capacity as the founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies; and Jean Bosco Nzeyimana, founder and chief executive officer, HABONA Ltd.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel in New York City *September 21, 2016*

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Mr. President, it’s very good to see you again. First, I want to thank you for the memorandum of understanding that we signed last week. It greatly enhances Israel’s security. It fortifies the principle that you’ve enunciated many times that Israel should be able to defend itself, by itself, against any threat.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the extensive security and intelligence cooperation between our two countries. I don’t think people at large understand the breadth and depth of this cooperation, but I know it. And I want to thank you on behalf of all the people of Israel.

Third, I want to thank you for the many meetings we’ve had in which we discussed how to confront common challenges and how to seize common opportunities. The greatest challenge is, of course, the unremitting fanati-

cism. The greatest opportunity is to advance a durable peace. That’s a goal that I and the people of Israel will never give up on.

We’ve been fortunate that, in pursuing these two tasks, Israel has no greater friend than the United States of America, and America has no greater friend than Israel. Our alliance has grown decade after decade, through successive Presidents, a bipartisan Congress, and the overwhelming support of the American people. It’s an unbreakable bond based on common values, buttressed by common interest, and bound by a shared destiny.

And I want to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to once again discuss how we can shape that destiny together. And I’d like to add, if I may, one final point. As you conclude your Presidency, I know you’re going to be busy with many, many things, much more than

improving what I hear is a terrific golf game. [Laughter] Your voice—your influential voice—will be heard for many decades. And I know you'll continue to support Israel's right to defend itself and its right to thrive as a Jewish state. So I want you to know, Barack, that you'll always be a welcome guest in Israel.

And by the way, I don't play golf, but right next to my home in Caesarea, in Israel, is a terrific golf course. So—

President Obama. We'll set up a tee time. [Laughter]

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Well, it's good to once again welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu and his delegation here. I want to start by just sending a message that all of the American people, my entire administration, and me, personally, are thinking about Shimon Peres, a great friend, a hero, and giant in the history of Israel. And we are hopeful that he will have a speedy recovery.

I've always joked whenever I've seen Shimon that I wanted to see what he ate and what he did, because he's always looked so good. I know this has been a challenging time for him and his family, but I wanted to make sure that I relay my gratitude to him for his friendship and his leadership in helping to forge a strong U.S.-Israeli bond.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu mentioned, the bond between the United States and Israel is unbreakable. It is based on common values, family ties, a recognition that a Jewish State of Israel is one of our most important allies, and a guiding principle throughout my Presidency—one that I've expressed often to the Prime Minister—is, is that it is important for America's national security to ensure that we have a safe and secure Israel, one that can defend itself.

And so the memorandum of understanding that we recently signed, I think, is indicative of that. What it does is provide an assurance and a foundation for the kinds of ongoing military and intelligence cooperation that has been the hallmark of our relationship. It allows, I think, Israeli planners the kind of certainty in a moment where there's enormous uncertainty in the re-

gion. It is a very difficult and dangerous time in the Middle East, and we want to make sure that Israel has the full capabilities it needs in order to keep the Israeli people safe and secure.

So this will give us an opportunity to talk about the challenges that arise out of situations like Syria. I'll also be interested in hearing from the Prime Minister his assessment of conditions within Israel and in the West Bank. Obviously, our hearts go out to those who have been injured, both Israeli and Palestinian. Clearly, there is great danger of not just terrorism, but also flareups of violence. We do have concerns around settlement activity, as well. And our hope is that we can continue to be an effective partner with Israel in finding a path to peace.

Obviously, I'm only going to be President for another few months. The Prime Minister will be there quite a bit longer. And our hope will be that in these conversations we get a sense of how Israel sees the next few years, what the opportunities are and what the challenges are in order to assure that we keep alive the possibility of a stable, secure Israel at peace with its neighbors and a Palestinian homeland that meets the aspirations of their people.

But obviously, these are challenging times. One thing I can say about Prime Minister Netanyahu is, he has always been candid with us, and his team has cooperated very effectively with ours. We very much appreciate it. And I guarantee you that I will visit Israel often, because it is a beautiful country with beautiful people. And Michelle and the girls, I think, resent the fact that I've not taken them on most of these trips, so they're insistent that I do take them. Of course, they will appreciate the fact that the next time I visit Israel I won't have to sit in bilats—[laughter]—but instead can enjoy the sights and sounds of a remarkable country.

So thank you very much.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1 p.m. in the Holmes I room of the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former President Shimon Peres of Israel, who suffered a stroke on September 13.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia in New York City September 21, 2016

President Obama. It is a great pleasure to welcome my good friend, President Santos, and his delegation, so we have a chance to visit again. This is the first time that I'm seeing him in person since the historic agreement that was achieved in Colombia, ending the longest war in Latin America and providing an opportunity for Colombia to open an entirely new chapter of its history.

I could not be more supportive of these efforts. The American people welcome these efforts. I recognize that there are going to be a lot of challenges involved in implementation, and I recognize that the people of Colombia still have to lend their voice through a referendum in order for it to move forward. But I think this is an achievement of historic proportions. It ultimately will be good for the region, as well as the people of Colombia. It took a lot of courage and a lot of hard work by a lot of people. And we are very proud to have played a modest part in helping the dialogue go forward.

John Kerry is going to be visiting Colombia on Monday, and my understanding is, he's going to be taking a bipartisan group of congressional Members so that they can help to witness the amazing changes that are going to be taking place. And I also want to just thank President Santos and his delegation for the continued cooperation on a wide range of regional issues, including making sure that we don't slip on the progress that's been made in stamping out transnational drug organizations.

So it's a great achievement, and we're very proud of you. And congratulations.

President Santos. Thank you. Almost 6 years ago, when I decided to take this step, one of

the first persons that I informed about my intentions was President Obama. And since then, he has been a great support, every day, every week asking how is it going, and supporting it in every way possible. You appointed a Special Envoy, Bernie Aronson, and he did a terrific job. The Secretary of State has been there many times, pushing the process forward.

And I wanted to give to you a special edition, 297 pages. I think it's the most comprehensive peace agreement to date, probably in history. It's every detail. But you deserve a lot of credit for this very historic agreement, which will change not only Colombia, the whole region. As you said, it is the oldest, longest, cruelest armed conflict that Latin America has had.

And thank you very much from the bottom of my heart, in the name of 50 million Colombians. President Obama, here is the result of this effort.

[*At this point, President Santos presented President Obama with a ceremonial copy of the peace agreement.*]

President Obama. Thank you so much. It's beautiful.

President Santos. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you. This is—what a great gift. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Holmes I room of the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin and Reps. Samuel S. Farr and James P. McGovern.