

Remarks at a Working Lunch With African Leaders in New York City
September 20, 2017

Thank you very much, General. I appreciate it. And I'm greatly honored to host this lunch, to be joined by the leaders of Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, and South Africa. In particular, I want to thank President Condé, who is representing the African Union. Thank you. Thank you.

In this room, I see partners for promoting prosperity and peace on a range of economic, humanitarian, and security issues. We hope to extend our economic partnerships with countries who are committed to self-reliance and to fostering opportunities for job creation in both Africa and the United States.

Africa has tremendous business potential. I have so many friends going to your countries, trying to get rich. I congratulate you. They're spending a lot of money. But it does, it has a tremendous business potential and representing huge amounts of different markets. And for American firms, it's really become a place that they have to go, that they want to go.

Six of the world's ten fastest growing economies are in Africa. Increasing American trade and investment across diverse industries—including agriculture, energy, transportation, health care, travel, and tourism—will further transform lives throughout the continent. Secretary Tillerson and the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation are already considering an investment worth hundreds of millions of dollars in Côte d'Ivoire, which has made impressive economic reforms, really done a tremendous job.

We also hope that African firms—like the company Sasol—consider making investments in the United States. Sasol, as an example, is building a \$9 billion petrochemical plant in Louisiana, which will bring new jobs to the State, and really hard-working Americans will be manning those jobs.

But we cannot have prosperity if we're not healthy. We will continue our partnership on critical health initiatives. Uganda has made incredible strides in the battle against HIV/AIDS. In Guinea and Nigeria, you fought a horrifying Ebola outbreak. Namibia's health system is increasingly self-sufficient. My Secretary of Health and Human Services will be traveling to Africa to promote our Global Health Security Agenda.

Yet we know that our prosperity depends, above all, on peace. The United States will partner with the countries and organizations, like the African Union, that lead successful efforts to end violence, to prevent the spread of terrorism, and to respond to humanitarian crises. I commend your troops currently serving in the field. Very brave. Very, very brave what they're going through.

As you well know, too many people are suffering from conflict in Africa. In the Central African Republic, the Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia, and South Sudan, among others, they're going through some very, very tough and very dangerous times. Terrorist groups, such as ISIS, al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and Al Qaida also threaten African peace. The United States is proud to work with you to eradicate terrorist safe havens, to cut off their finances, and to discredit their depraved ideology. And a number of you have told me—actually, last night—that we've been doing a very good job over the last 6 or 7 months in particular.

We're closely monitoring and deeply disturbed by the ongoing violence in South Sudan and in the Congo. Millions of lives are at risk, and we continue to provide humanitarian assistance. But real results in halting this catastrophe will require an African-led peace process and a sincere—really sincere—commitment of all parties involved. And I know you're working on that, and you're working on that very hard. To assist in these efforts, I'm sending Ambassador Nikki Haley to Africa to discuss avenues of conflict and resolution [conflict resolution][°] and, most importantly, prevention.

Lastly, I want to discuss our partnership against a global challenge. Today, the world faces an enormous security threat from North Korean regime. We must all stand together and be accountable in implementing United Nations sanctions and resolutions in response to North Korea's hostile and menacing actions.

We believe that a free, independent, and democratic nation, in all cases, is the best vehicle for human happiness and success. Thank you for joining me for this critical discussion of the challenges and the opportunities facing our nations.

Africa, I have to say, is a continent of tremendous, tremendous potential. The outlook is bright. I look forward to hearing from you and your advice during the meal. I thought rather than just eating, we'll have long discussions, and I look forward to that very much. But I also look forward to getting to know so many of you, and so many of you I do know. And it's an honor. It's an honor.

And I really want to congratulate you, growing very fast economically and in every other way. You've done a terrific job. You've had some tremendous obstacles placed in your path, but you have done, really, an absolutely incredible job.

So I want to thank you, and I look forward to our discussion. Thank you. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:31 p.m. in the Spellman Room at the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster, who introduced the President; President Alassane Dramane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire; Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia; President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of Ghana; President Alpha Condé of Guinea; President Hage Geingob of Namibia; President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria; President Macky Sall of Senegal; President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda; President Jacob Zuma of South Africa; and Secretary of Health and Human Services Thomas E. Price. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : African leaders, working lunch in New York City.

Locations: New York City.

Names: Akufo-Addo, Nana Addo Dankwa; Buhari, Muhammadu; Condé, Alpha; Geingob, Hage; Hailemariam Desalegn; Haley, Nikki R.; McMaster, H.R.; Museveni, Yoweri Kaguta; Ouattara, Alassane Dramane; Price, Thomas E.; Sall, Macky; Tillerson, Rex W.; Zuma, Jacob.

Subjects: Africa : African leaders, working lunch with President Trump; Africa : African Union :: Peacekeeping efforts; Africa : Counterterrorism efforts; Africa : Economic growth and development; Africa : Political unrest and violence; Africa : Public health facilities and

[°] White House correction.

programs; Africa : Relations with U.S.; Africa : Security cooperation with U.S.; Africa : Trade with U.S.; Africa : West Africa, Ebola epidemic, response and containment efforts; Congo, Democratic Republic of the : Political unrest and violence; Côte d'Ivoire, President; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Ethiopia, Prime Minister; Foreign policy, U.S. : Global Health Security Agenda; Foreign policy, U.S. : Humanitarian assistance programs; Ghana, President; Guinea, President; Health and Human Services, Department of : Secretary; Millennium Challenge Corporation; Namibia, President; New York : President's visits; Nigeria, President; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development; North Korea : U.S. and international sanctions; Senegal, President; South Africa, President; South Sudan : Political unrest and violence; State, Department of : Secretary; Uganda : HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment strategy; Uganda : President; United Nations : U.S. Permanent Representative; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: National Security Adviser.

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