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And in fact, just this morning, some of you went with me out to the housing project where you could see just across the highway that people had been living literally in shanties and were now in their own homes. And our aid programs contribute to the ability of people to build their own homes for themselves. Without the aid, they couldn't afford to do it. With the aid, they have a chance to have good housing and to become more prosperous citizens. So I think we should do both things.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:40 p.m. at the Cape Grace Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Address to the Parliament of South Africa in Cape Town
March 26, 1998

Thank you very much, Premier Molefe, for that fine introduction. Mr. President, Deputy President Mbeki, Madam Speaker, Mr. Chairman of the National Council of Provinces, Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, I am deeply honored to be the first American President ever to visit South Africa and even more honored to stand before this Parliament to address a South Africa truly free and democratic at last.

Joining my wife and me on this tour of Africa, and especially here, are many Members of our Congress and distinguished members of my Cabinet and administration, men and women who supported the struggle for a free South Africa, leaders of the American business community now awakening to the promise and potential of South Africa, people of all different background and beliefs.

Among them, however, are members of the Congressional Black Caucus and African-American members of my government. It is especially important for them to be here because it was not so long ago in the long span of human history that their ancestors were uprooted from this continent and sold into slavery in the United States. But now they return to Africa as leaders of the United States. Today they sit alongside the leaders of the new South Africa, united in the powerful poetry of justice

As I look out at all of you, I see our common promise. Two centuries ago, the courage and imagination that created the United States and the principles that are enshrined in our Constitution inspired men and women without a voice, across the world, to believe that one day they too could have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Now, the courage and imagination that created the new South Africa and the principles that guide your Constitution inspire all of us to be animated by the belief that one day humanity all the world over can at last be released from the bonds of hatred and bigotry.

It is tempting for Americans of all backgrounds, I think, perhaps to see too many similarities in the stories of our two countries, because sometimes similarities which appear to be profound are in fact superficial. And they can obscure the unique and complex struggle that South Africa has made to shed the chains of its past for a brighter tomorrow.

Nonetheless, in important ways, our paths do converge by a vision of real multiracial democracy bound together by healing and hope, renewal and redemption. Therefore I came here to say simply this: Let us work with each other; let us learn from each other to turn the hope we now share into a history that all of us can be proud of.

Mr. President, for millions upon millions of Americans, South Africa's story is embodied by your heroic sacrifice and your breathtaking walk "out of the darkness and into the glorious light." But you are always the first to say that the real heroes of South Africa's transformation are its people, who first walked away from the past and now move with determination, patience, and courage toward a new day and a new millennium.

We rejoice at what you have already accomplished. We seek to be your partners and your

true friends in the work that lies ahead: overcoming the lingering legacy of apartheid, seizing the promise of your rich land and your gifted people.

From our own 220-year experience with democracy we know that real progress requires, in the memorable phrase of Max Weber, "the long and slow-boring of hard boards." We know that democracy is always a work still in the making, a march toward what our own Founders called a more perfect Union.

You have every reason to be hopeful. South Africa was reborn, after all, just 4 years ago. In the short time since, you've worked hard to deepen your democracy, to spread prosperity, to educate all your people, and to strengthen the hand of justice. The promise before you is immense: a people unshackled, free to give full expression to their energy, intellect, and creativity; a nation embraced by the world, whose success is important to all our futures.

America has a profound and pragmatic stake in your success; an economic stake because we, like you, need strong partners to build prosperity; a strategic stake because of 21st century threats to our common security, from terrorism, from international crime and drug trafficking, from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, from the spread of deadly disease and the degradation of our common environment. These perils do not stop at any nation's borders. And we have a moral stake, because in overcoming your past you offer a powerful example to people who are torn by their own divisions in all parts of this Earth. Simply put, America wants a strong South Africa; America needs a strong South Africa. And we are determined to work with you as you build a strong South Africa.

In the first 4 years of your freedom, it has been our privilege to support your transition with aid and assistance. Now, as the new South Africa emerges, we seek a genuine partnership based on mutual respect and mutual reward. Like all partners, we cannot agree on everything. Sometimes our interests and our views diverge, but that is true even in family partnerships. [*Laughter*]

Nonetheless, I am convinced, we agree on most things and on the important things because we share the same basic values: a commitment to democracy and to peace, a commitment to open markets, a commitment to give all our people the tools they need to succeed in the modern world, a commitment to make elemental human rights the birth right of every single child.

Over the past 4 years, we put the building blocks of our partnership in place, starting with the Binational Commission, headed by Deputy President Mbeki and our Vice President Al Gore. This remarkable effort has given high-level energy to critical projects, from energy to education, from business development to science and technology, cutting through redtape, turning good words into concrete deeds. We are deeply indebted to you, Mr. Mbeki, for your outstanding leadership, and we thank you for it.

The BNC brings to life what I believe you call *"Masihlangane,"* the act of building together. As we look toward the future, we will seek to build together new partnerships in trade and investment through incentives such as OPEC's new Africa Opportunity Fund, already supporting two projects here in South Africa in transportation and telecommunications.

We will seek to expand joint efforts to combat the grave threat of domestic and international crime through our new FBI and customs and immigration offices here in South Africa. We will seek to strengthen our cooperation around the world, for already South Africa's leadership in extending the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and creating an Africa nuclear-free zone have made all our children's futures more secure.

I also hope we can build together to meet the persistent problems and fulfill the remarkable promise of the African continent. Yes, Africa remains the world's greatest development challenge, still plagued in places by poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, and unemployment. Yes, terrible conflicts continue to tear at the heart of the continent, as I saw yesterday in Rwanda. But from Cape Town to Kampala, from Dar es Salaam to Dakar, democracy is gaining strength; business is growing; peace is making progress. We are seeing what Deputy President Mbeki has called an African renaissance.

In coming to Africa, my motive in part was to help the American people see the new Africa with new eyes and to focus our own efforts on new policies suited to the new reality. It used to be when American policy makers thought of Africa at all, they would ask, what can we do for Africa, or whatever can we do about Africa? Those were the wrong questions.

The right question today is, what can we do with Africa?

Throughout this trip I've been talking about ideas we want to develop with our African partners to benefit all our people: ideas to improve our children's education through training and technology; to ensure that none of our children are hungry or without good health care; to build impartial, credible, and effective justice systems; to strengthen the foundations of civil society and deepen democracy; to build strong economics from the top down and from the grassroots up; to prevent conflict from erupting and to stop it quickly if it does.

Each of these efforts has a distinct mission, but all share a common approach: to help the African people help themselves to become better equipped, not only to dream their own dreams but, at long last, to make those dreams come true. Yesterday in Entebbe we took an important step forward. There, with leaders from eastern and central Africa, we pledged to work together to build a future in which the doors of opportunity are open to all and countries move from the margins to the mainstream of the global economy to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights in all nations, to banish genocide from the region and this continent so that every African child can grow up in safety and peace.

As Africa grows strong, America grows stronger through prosperous consumers on this continent and new African products brought to our markets, through new partners to fight and find solutions to common problems from the spread of AIDS and malaria to the greenhouse gases that are changing our climate, and most of all, through the incalculable benefit of new ideas, new energy, new passion from the minds and hearts of the people charting their own future on this continent. Yes, Africa still needs the world, but more that ever it is equally true that the world needs Africa.

Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, at the dawn of the 21st century we have a remarkable opportunity to leave behind this century's darkest moments while fulfilling its most brilliant possibilities, not just in South Africa, nor just in America, but in all the world. I come to this conviction well aware of the obstacles that lie in the path. From Bosnia to the Middle East, from Northern Ireland to the Great Lakes region of Africa, we have seen the terrible price people pay when they insist on fighting and killing and keeping down their neighbors. For all the wonders of the modern world, we are still bedeviled by notions that our racial, ethnic, tribal, and religious differences are somehow more important that our common humanity, that we can only lift ourselves up if we have someone to look down on. But then I look around this hall. There is every conceivable difference, on the surface, among the Americans and the South Africans in this great Hall of Freedom. Different races, different religions, different native tongues, but underneath, the same hopes, the same dreams, the same values. We all cherish family and faith, work and community, freedom and responsibility. We all want our children to grow up in a world where their talents are matched by their opportunities. And we all have come to believe that our countries will be stronger and our futures will be brighter as we let go of our hatreds and our fears and as we realize that what we have in common really does matter far more than our differences.

The preamble to your Constitution says, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity." In the context of your own history and the experience of the world in this century, those simple words are a bold clarion call to the future, an affirmation of humanity at its best, an assurance that those who build can triumph over those who tear down, that truly, the peacemakers are blessed, and they shall inherit the Earth.

Thank you, and God bless the new South Africa.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the Chamber of the House of Assembly. In his remarks, he referred to Premier Popo Molefe of the North-West Province; President Nelson Mandela and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; Frene Ginwala, Speaker of the House; and Premier Patrick Lekota, Free State Province, and Chair, National Council of Provinces. The President also referred to the U.S.-South Africa Binational Commission (BNC).