

laws discriminate against women and limit their ability to acquire and transmit citizenship to their children or spouses, which can lead to statelessness. The United States will continue to work to empower women and girls and ensure opportunities for displaced and stateless women throughout the world.

Our values and our interests dictate that the protection of the most vulnerable is a critical component of our foreign policy. We have a

moral imperative to save lives. We also have interest in sustaining U.S. leadership, which enables us to drive the development of international humanitarian principles, programs, and policies like no other government in the world. Such efforts promote reconciliation, security, and well-being in circumstances where despair and misery threaten stability and critical U.S. national security interests.

## Statement on the Approval of the Settlement in the *Cobell* Class-Action Lawsuit on Indian Trust Management June 20, 2011

After 15 years of litigation, today's decision marks another important step forward in the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Country. Resolving this dispute was a priority for my administration, and we will engage in government-to-government consultations with tribal nations regarding the land

consolidation component of the settlement to ensure that this moves ahead at an appropriate pace and in an appropriate manner. And going forward, my administration will continue to strengthen our relationship with Indian Country.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser June 20, 2011

Thank you, everybody. It is wonderful to see so many great friends. To Amy and all those who helped to organize tonight's dinner, I couldn't be more grateful.

Debbie Wasserman Schultz, our new DNC chair, thank you for all the extraordinary work that you're doing. I could not have made a better pick.

I want to spend most of the time in a conversation as opposed to just me making a long speech. But I do want to talk a little bit about the context in which we meet this evening. Obviously, we're going through extraordinarily challenging times. We've gone through the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. And a huge amount of energy has been devoted over the last 2 years to making sure that we pulled ourselves back from the brink; that an economy that was contracting is growing again; that we're putting more and more people back to work; that businesses are able to succeed; that we're educating our kids; that

we're making investments that will help assure that America remains not only the most powerful country on Earth, but also one that is just and one that lives up to the American Dream, the idea that anybody who has a good idea, anybody who's willing to work hard, that they've got a shot at not only living a good life, but also passing on an even better life to their kids.

We also have an extraordinarily challenging international environment. When I came into office, we were in the midst of two wars. We are almost done with our troop presence in Iraq, by the end of this year. And in Afghanistan, we're in the process of a transition where we are starting to give more and more responsibility to Afghans for their own security, at the same time as we have been dogged in pursuing Al Qaida and are creating a situation where it is very, very difficult for them to operate.

But in the midst of all this, what we've now also seen is the kind of tumult taking place in

the Middle East that we haven't seen in a very long time. And the consequences of what's happening there are potentially as significant as the consequences of what took place in Europe when the Berlin Wall came down. It poses great challenges, but it also poses great opportunities.

And I think that the most important message I have for all of you here tonight is that even as we try to manage what is going to be a very difficult and challenging situation over the next 12 months, the next 24 months, the next decade, that one inviolable principle will be that the United States and Israel will always be stalwart allies and friends, that that bond isn't breakable, and that Israel's security will always be at the top tier of considerations in terms of how America manages its foreign policy. Because it's the right thing to do, because Israel is our closest ally and friend, it is a robust democracy, it shares our values, and it shares our principles.

Now, what's also going to be true is that both the United States and Israel are going to have to look at this new landscape with fresh eyes. It's not going to be sufficient for us just to keep on doing the same things we've been doing and expect somehow that things are going to work themselves out. We're going to have to be creative, and we're going to have to be engaged. We're going to have to look for opportunities where the best impulses in the Middle East come to the fore and the worst impulses are weakened.

We have to do so from a position of strength, which is why my administration has done more to promote Israel's security, its qualitative military edge, its defense capabilities, than any administration over the last 25 years. And we have made that commitment consistently.

But it also means that we've got to engage diplomatically. It means that we're going to have to find out who are the partners that can work with us and how do we strengthen them, and how do we isolate those who are unwilling to work with us and weaken them.

And there are going to be moments over the course of the next 6 months or the next 12 months or the next 24 months in which there may be tactical disagreements in terms of how we approach these difficult problems. But the broader vision, which is one in which Israel is a secure Jewish state, is able to live in peace with its neighbors, where kids can get on the bus or go to bed at night and not have to worry about missiles landing on them, where commerce and interactions between peoples in the region is occurring in a normal fashion, where the hopes and dreams of the original travelers to Israel—the original settlers in Israel, that those hopes and dreams that date back a millennium, that those hopes are realized. That will remain our north star; that will remain our goal.

And I'm absolutely confident that we can achieve that goal. But it's going to require some hard work. And it's going to require that not only this administration employs all of its creative powers to try to bring about peace in the region, but it's also going to require all of you, as engaged citizens of the United States who are friends of Israel, making sure that you are giving us suggestions, you are in an honest dialogue with us, that you're helping to shape how both Americans and Israelis think about the opportunities and challenges.

All of you are leaders in your community. And my hope is, is that through the kind of conversations that we're having here tonight, that we're going to be able to together craft the kind of strategy that not only leads to a strong America, but also leads to a strong Israel.

So to all of you who are here, thank you again for your past support, thank you for your friendship, and thank you for what I anticipate will be many years of collaboration between us in the years to come. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the Mandarin Oriental hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Amy Friedkin, former president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.