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THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

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President Discusses G8 Summit, Progress in Africa

Meyer Auditorium at Freer Gallery
Washington, D.C.

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9:40 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all. Thanks a lot. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's a pleasure for Laura and me to join you here at the Smithsonian, where America's heritage is kept and where the achievements of all cultures are celebrated.

I thank Wally Stern for your kind introduction and for his leadership of the Hudson Institute. I appreciate all the Hudson Institute members who are here. Thank you for your service to our country. I want to thank the members of the Diplomatic Corps who have joined us. I appreciate your coming.

I particularly want to say thanks to the ambassadors from the African nations who are here. I have visited your beautiful and hopeful continent, and next month, Laura will travel to South Africa, Tanzania and Rwanda to highlight the partnership we're building on education, the empowerment of women, and the fight against HIV/AIDS. She's a really good ambassador for our country. (Applause.)

I want to -- I appreciate our Secretary of State who has joined us today. Condoleezza Rice, I'm proud you're here. Thanks for joining us. You're doing a fabulous job, by the way. (Applause.)



Ambassador Rob Portman, the U.S. Trade Representative is with us. Ambassador, thanks for joining us. (Applause.) Andrew Natsios, Administrator of USAID is with us. Good to see you, Andrew. Thanks for coming. (Applause.) Randy Tobias, who is the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator -- Ambassador Randy Tobias -- thank you for joining us, Mr. Ambassador. (Applause.) I appreciate your noble work.

I want to thank Senator Sam Brownback and Congressman Jim Kolbe and Congresswoman Nita Lowey for joining for us. We're honored you're here. Thanks for coming. (Applause.)

Secretary Ann Veneman, the UNICEF Executive Director, is with us. It's great to see you, Ann. Thanks for being here. I want to thank Larry Small, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute. I want to thank Dr. Julian Raby, the Director of the Freer and Sackler Galleries of Art. I appreciate Herb London, the President, Ken Weinstein, the Executive Officer of the Hudson Institute. We thank you all for being here. (Applause.)

Next week, I'm going to head to the G8 summit in Scotland. Out there, I'll meet with leaders of the industrialized nations. As in earlier meetings, we will discuss the great political and economic progress being made in Africa, and the next steps we can take with African leaders to build on that progress. The whole world

will benefit from prosperity and stability on the African continent. And the peoples of Africa deserve the peace and freedom and opportunity that are the natural rights of all mankind.

We seek progress in Africa and throughout the developing world because our interests are directly at stake. September the 11th, 2001, Americans found that instability and lawlessness in a distant country can bring danger to our own. In this new century, we are less threatened by fleets and armies than by small cells of men who operate in the shadows and exploit weakness and despair. The ultimate answer to those threats is to encourage prosperous, democratic and lawful societies that join us in overcoming the forces of terror -- allies that we're finding across the continent of Africa. We fight the war on terror with our power; we will win the war on terror with freedom and justice and hope. (Applause.)

We seek progress in Africa and throughout the developing world because conscience demands it. Americans believe that human rights and the worth of human lives are not determined by race or nationality, or diminished by distance. We believe that every life matters and every person counts. And so we are moved when thousands of young lives are ended every day by the treatable disease of malaria. We're moved when children watch their parents slowly die of AIDS, leaving young boys and girls traumatized, frightened and alone. Peoples of Africa are opposing these challenges with courage and determination and we will stand beside them.

Yet the continent of Africa is so much more than the sum of its problems. After years of colonization and Marxism and racism, Africa is on the threshold of great advances. Economic growth is at the highest level in eight years. Leaders have emerged from South Africa to Nigeria to Kenya to broker an end to old conflicts. Last year alone five nations south of the Sahara held successful democratic elections. All who live in Africa can be certain, as you seize this moment of opportunity, America will be your partner and your friend.

In a developing world, we have an unprecedented opportunity to help other nations achieve historic victories over extreme poverty with policies and approaches that are tested and proven. These victories will require new resources. The United States has tripled overseas development aid to Africa during my presidency. And we're making a strong commitment for the future. Between 2004 and 2010, I proposed to double aid to Africa once again, with a primary focus on helping reforming countries.

Yet new resources are not enough. We need new thinking by all nations. Our greatest challenge is to get beyond empty symbolism and discredited policies, and match our good intentions with good results.

First, overcoming extreme poverty requires partnership, not paternalism. Economic development is not something we do for countries, it is something they achieve with us. (Applause.) Their leaders, by definition, must play the main role as agents of reform and progress, instead of passive recipients of money.

Over the decades, we've learned that without economic and social freedom, without the rule of law and effective, honest government, international aid has little impact or value. But where there's freedom and the rule of law, every dollar of aid, trade, charitable giving, and foreign and local investment can rapidly improve people's lives. (Applause.)

Economic aid that expects little will achieve little. Economic aid that expects much can help to change the world. Through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, established a year-and-a-half ago, America has begun awarding generous financial aid to countries that fight corruption, embrace democratic government, encourage free markets, and invest in the health and education of their people.

Eight nations in Africa are now moving toward grants. In April, Madagascar became the first country to sign a compact that begins aid to vital development projects. In the last six weeks, the MCC board has approved three compacts, one with an African nation -- and I expect the MCC to move quickly in the future. Governments making the hard choices deserve our strong support. I call upon the United States Congress to fully support this initiative for new hope and progress across the developing world. (Applause.)

Second, overcoming extreme poverty goes hand-in-hand with improving the environment. Stagnant economies are one of the greatest environmental threats in our world. People who lack food and shelter and sanitation cannot be expected to preserve the environment at the expense of their own survival. Poor societies cannot afford to invest in cleaner, more efficient technologies. Indira Gandhi spoke of poverty and need as the greatest polluters. The long-term answer to environmental challenges is the rapid, sustained economic progress of poor nations. (Applause.)

The best way to help nations develop while limiting pollution and improving public health is to promote technologies for generating energy that are clean, affordable and secure. Some have suggested the best solution to environmental challenges and climate change is to oppose development and put the world on an energy diet. But at this moment, about two billion people have no access to any form of modern energy. Blocking that access would condemn them to permanent poverty, disease, high infant mortality, polluted water and polluted air.

We're taking a better approach. In the last three years, the United States has launched a series of initiatives to help developing countries adopt new energy sources, from cleaner use of coal to hydrogen vehicles, to solar and wind power, to the production of clean-burning methane, to less-polluting power plants. And we continue to look for more opportunities to deepen our partnerships with developing nations. The whole world benefits when developing nations have the best and latest energy technologies.

Third, overcoming extreme poverty will require lifting a burden of debt that we know poor nations cannot repay. Unending debt payments have fewer resources for governments to spend on the needs of their people and make it impossible to join the global economy as a full participant. Zambia, for example, is spending more on debt service than the government's entire budget for health and education. Last year, poor nations owed \$7 billion in debt payments to creditors. This burden is hurting people in desperate need and this burden must be lifted.

In 2001, I challenged the World Bank to give 50 percent of its aid to poor countries in grants instead of loans. And the bank has moved steadily closer to that goal. With the leadership of Great Britain and the United States, the G8 countries are urging cancellation of \$40 billion in debt owed by 18 of the world's poorest nations, including 14 nations in Africa. (Applause.) Twenty more countries can qualify for this debt forgiveness in the future with good government and sound economic policies. We're determined not only to relieve debt, but to erase it, so nations in need can face the future with a clean slate. (Applause.)

Fourth, overcoming extreme poverty will require greater trade. While aid and debt relief can create better conditions for development, it is trade that provides the engine for development. (Applause.) Only 30 years ago, South Korea's per capita GDP was equal to that of many African countries. Thanks to export-led growth, South Korea is as rich as many European countries. This example can be multiplied throughout the world and lift great numbers of people out of poverty.

The developing world stands to gain the most from an open trading system. Historically, developing nations that open themselves to trade grow at a rate several times higher than countries that protect -- that practice protectionism. The poor of the world do not experience trade as globalization. They experience trade as running water and electric power and decent housing, broader education and better health care for their families. (Applause.)

Too many nations have been cut off from the economic progress of our time, and we must expand the circle of trade to include them. Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which has reduced barriers to trade, U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa increased 25 percent last year. And America's imports from AGOA countries rose 88 percent. Now we must take the next large step: expanding the entire global trading system through the Doha negotiations. The World Bank estimates that completing these negotiations could add \$350 billion annually to developing countries' incomes, and lift 140 million people out of poverty. The Doha negotiations are the most practical and important anti-poverty initiative in the world, and we must bring them to a prompt and successful conclusion. (Applause.)

Fifth, overcoming extreme poverty will require an atmosphere of peace, achieved in some cases by effective active military forces that can end terrible conflicts. Recent wars -- recent history shows how wars and internal conflicts can stop the development of whole nations. But we're seeing progress. Tens of thousands of refugees who fled war are returning home in places such as Liberia and Sierra Leone and Burundi. We can add to this progress. Over the next five years, America will provide training for more than 40,000 African peacekeepers as part of a broader initiative by the G8 countries. We will help African forces to preserve justice and order on the African continent.

We're strongly committed to peace for all the peoples of Sudan. American mediation was critical to ending a 20-year civil war between north and south, and we're working to fully implement the comprehensive peace agreement signed last January. Yet the violence in Darfur region is clearly genocide. The human cost is beyond

calculation. In the short-term, more troops are needed to protect the innocent, and nations of the African Union are stepping forward to provide them. By September, the African Union mission in Sudan will grow from 2,700 to 7,700 personnel. In a NATO operation next month, the United States military will airlift more than 1,000 Rwandan troops. We will support the construction of additional 16 base camps over the next two months, and we will provide communications and vehicle maintenance for the entire force.

In the long run, the tragedy in western Sudan requires a settlement between the government and the rebels. And our message is clear: All sides must control their forces, end the killing, and negotiate the peace of a suffering land. (Applause.)

Finally, overcoming extreme poverty will require humanitarian aid that focuses on results, not merely on inputs and other flawed measures of compassion. True compassion is measured by real improvements in the lives of men, women and children. And that is the goal and that is the focus of American policy.

Aid from America will help avert a famine this year in the Horn of Africa. All told, nearly 60 percent of global food aid to the continent of Africa comes from the United States, and Americans are proud to give that aid. (Applause.)

And since 2003, our country has undertaken a major effort against HIV/AIDS, the largest health initiative in history to combat a specific disease. Across Africa, we're working with local health officials to expand AIDS testing facilities, to train and support doctors and nurses and counselors, to upgrade clinics and hospitals, to care for children orphaned by AIDS, and to support pastors and priests and others who are teaching young people the values of respect and responsibility and prevention. We're making life-giving treatment possible for more than 230,000 adults and children in Africa. We're determined to reach our five-year goal of treating two million. (Applause.)

This effort is succeeding because America is providing resources and Africans are providing leadership. Local health officials set the strategy and we're supporting them. We're also respecting the values and traditions of Africa. Uganda and other nations are applying a prevention strategy called ABC -- Abstinence, Be faithful in marriage, and Condoms. ABC is balanced, effective, and reflects the moral teachings of African cultures. And no one is helped when outsiders try to impose a lower standard of responsibility. (Applause.)

Today, in Africa, the United States is engaged as never before. We're seeing great progress, and great needs remain. So this morning, I announced three additional initiatives to help Africans address urgent challenges. Across the continent, there is a deep need for the empowerment of women, and that begins with education. Educated young women have lower rates of HIV/AIDS, healthier families, and higher rates of education for their own children. Yet only half of the children complete primary education in Africa.

Together with African leaders, we must work for the education of every African child. And to move closer to that goal, today, I proposed a double funding for America's African Education Initiative. (Applause.) In the next four years, we should provide \$400 million to train half-a-million teachers, and provided scholarships for 300,000 young people, mostly girls. (Applause.) We hope other nations will join us. We must give more girls in Africa a real chance to avoid exploitation and to chart their own future.

Another important aspect of empowerment and the fight against AIDS is the legal protection of women and girls against sexual violence and abuse. (Applause.) Many African nations have already taken steps to improve legal rights for women. South Africa, for example, has an innovative model to fight rape and domestic violence: special units in hospitals where victims can report crime and receive counseling and care, and special judges and prosecutors and police units to ensure that criminals are punished.

Today, I announce a new effort to spread this approach more broadly on the continent. I ask Congress to provide \$55 million over three years to promote women's justice and empowerment in four African nations, nations that can stand as examples of reform for others. I'll urge other G8 nations to join us in protecting the lives and the rights of women in Africa.

African health officials have also told us of their continuing battle with malaria, which in some countries can cause more death than AIDS. Approximately 1 million last year alone died on the African continent because of malaria. And in the overwhelming majority of cases, the victims are less than five years old, their lives suddenly ended by nothing more than a mosquito bite. The toll of malaria is even more tragic because the disease, itself,

is highly treatable and preventable. Yet this is also our opportunity, because we know that large-scale action can defeat this disease in whole regions. And the world must take action. (Applause.)

Next week at the G8, I will urge developed countries and private foundations to join in a broad, aggressive campaign to cut the mortality rate for malaria across Africa in half. And our nation is prepared to lead. (Applause.) Next year, we will take comprehensive action in three countries -- Tanzania, Uganda and Angola -- to provide indoor spraying, long-lasting insecticide-treated nets, and effective new combination drugs to treat malaria. In addition, the Gates Foundation of Seattle is supporting a major effort to control malaria in Zambia. We've had a long tradition of public-private action. I'm grateful to have this strong partner in a good cause.

America will bring this anti-malaria effort to at least four more highly endemic African countries in 2007, and at least to five more in 2008. In the next five years, with the approval of Congress, we'll spend more than \$1.2 billion on this campaign. (Applause.)

An effort on this scale must be phased in, to avoid shortages of supplies. Yet we intend this effort to eventually cover more than 175 million people in 15 or more nations. We want to reduce malaria mortality in target countries by half, and save hundreds of thousands of lives.

I urge other wealthy nations and foundations to participate and expand this initiative to additional countries where the need is pressing. Together, we can live this threat and defeat this fear across the African continent.

Over the last four years, the United States has stood squarely with reformers in Africa on the side of prosperity and progress. We've tripled our aid to Africa; we plan to double it once again. But more than this, we're standing for good government, and energy development, and debt relief, and expanded trade, all of which will help African peoples live better lives and eventually overcome the need for aid.

America is acting in these areas because we share with Africans, themselves, a vision of what the continent can become -- a model of reform, a home to prosperous democracies, and a tribute to the strong spirit of the African peoples. This vision is necessary, realistic, and already on its way to achievement.

By standing with the hopes of Africa, America is also showing the kind of country we want to be. This weekend, we mark the anniversary of our founding. We celebrate our Declaration of Independence and the universal appeal of liberty it proclaims. We celebrate our men and women in uniform who protect and defend our freedom on missions far from home. And Americans on this Fourth of July can also celebrate a great tradition of generosity -- a tradition of relief after World War I, the Marshall Plan and the Peace Corps, a tradition that is strong in our own time.

A few years ago, a little girl in Namibia was born to a mother and father who both had HIV; she had the disease, as well. The name her parents gave her translates as the phrase, "There is no good in the world." Months ago, the girl was very sick and losing weight and close to death. But today, she and her entire family are receiving lifesaving medicine. Now she's a beautiful, shy, thriving six-year-old, with a new life ahead of her, and there's a little more good in the world.

Across Africa, people who were preparing to die are now preparing to live. (Applause.) And America is playing a role in so many of those miracles. We're a nation that repays our blessings with generosity to others. When we work with Africans to bring food to starving regions, and malaria treatments to remote villages, and miracle drugs that restore the dying to strength, this is part of our calling in the world. (Applause.) And as we answer that call, it makes us proud to be Americans.

Thanks for coming. May God bless you. Thank you all. (Applause.)

END 10:10 A.M. EDT