



[Briefing Room](#)

[Your Weekly Address](#)

[Speeches & Remarks](#)

[Press Briefings](#)

[Statements & Releases](#)

[White House Schedule](#)

[Presidential Actions](#)

[Executive Orders](#)

[Presidential Memoranda](#)

[Proclamations](#)

[Legislation](#)

[Pending Legislation](#)

[Signed Legislation](#)

[Vetoed Legislation](#)

[Nominations & Appointments](#)

[Disclosures](#)

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 2013

Remarks by President Obama and Archbishop Tutu After Roundtable Discussion

5:05 P.M. SAST

THE PRESIDENT: It is a great pleasure to be here at the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation Youth Center. It is appropriately named after somebody who has done heroic work not only on behalf of peace and justice, and the ending of Apartheid, but also who very early on took on the challenge of HIV/AIDS here in South Africa and around the world. And so I'm so proud to be with my friend again --

ARCHBISHOP TUTU: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: -- who is an unrelenting champion of justice and human dignity.

South Africa obviously has faced a heavy burden from HIV as well as other diseases -- Tuberculosis, most recently. But the great news is that South Africa is now leading the way in caring for its citizens, in paving the way for a brighter future for the South African people and their families, and I am very proud the United States has been such a terrific partner on this issue.

I was hearing stories from all these incredible folks -- some of whom are counselors and outreach workers, some of whom have struggled with HIV/AIDS themselves -- and the great news is that, in part because of leadership from people like Archbishop Tutu but also because of the great work of nurses like Sister Iris, or young people like Mbulelo, and wonderful counselors like Lindiwe, what we've seen is a reduction of the stigma around testing on HIV/AIDS, greater education around prevention, and what we've seen is treatment that allows people to manage HIV and live long and productive lives.

And a lot of that has to do with the terrific work of the South African people, but the United States has really done wonderful work through the PEPFAR program, started under my predecessor, President Bush, and continued through our administration. We've seen more than \$3.7 billion in supporting South Africa's efforts to combat HIV and AIDS.

Together, we're investing in building South Africa's capacity to manage a national response to HIV/AIDS. The South African government is showing leadership up and down the line, and the health minister here has talked about all the initiatives that are taking place. And this center is a wonderful example of that transition. It's moving from receiving U.S. government support through PEPFAR to now independent funding that continues to secure the health and success of Africa's next generation.

And part of what makes this center so successful is it combines not just health advice and testing, and counseling, but it also provides educational opportunities, sports activities, recreational activities so that young people are able to come here without the fear of stigma or potentially running into

their parents, and getting honest, smart advice about what they need to do to keep themselves healthy and to ensure that they are not infected by HIV/AIDS.

So because of the wonderful work that's being done on the ground, because of the partnership between the United States and South Africa -- a model, by the way, that has been duplicated across the continent -- we have the possibility of achieving an AIDS-free generation -- achieving an AIDS-free generation and making sure that everybody in our human family is able to enjoy their lives and raise families, and succeed in maintaining their health here in Africa and around the world.

So I just want to say thank you to all of you for sharing your stories with me. I want to give a special thanks to Ambassador Eric Goosby, who doesn't always get a lot of attention but has been an outstanding leader on behalf of our global AIDS efforts. And if it weren't for people like Eric as well as the people around this room, we'd be far, far behind, and a lot more people would be suffering tragedy. So thank you all.

And Archbishop Desmond Tutu needs to say something because his picture is over there. (Laughter.) His name is on the project. I think it's fair to say that --

ARCHBISHOP TUTU: Yes, I should have said this earlier but then I -- anytime is okay. It is a very big honor to welcome the President of the United States, even at such a somber time for us South Africans.

It is a special joy to welcome the President to Africa, the continent of his forbearers, the cradle of humanity. I don't have to compete against your beautiful Michelle doing pushups in public. (Laughter.)

Mr. President, when you became the first black incumbent of the White House, you don't know what you did for our psyches. My wife sat in front of the TV with tears running down her face as she watched the celebration with you in Chicago. You won. And we won. And you repeated the feat when the odds were stacked against you. So welcome home, even if you're about to go. (Laughter.)

Thank you and the American people. You heard everyone here thanking you so much for the contribution that the PEPFAR fund has made in our struggle against TB, HIV, and AIDS, and malaria -- not just here, but in other parts of Africa. Our center, as you have heard, is run by the HIV center of the university where you are going just now. You have funded us. You funded funding a center in the University of Stellenbosch TB Center. And we have just rejoiced to hear of the HIV infections in infants has dropped by a whopping 63 percent -- in very large measure due to the financial support that we have received from yourselves. So thank you.

As you have been here before -- I mean Africa -- you have heard us speak of something called

Ubuntu -- Ubuntu -- and we've said a person is a person to other persons. Your success is our success. Your failure, whether you like it or not, is our failure. (Laughter.)

And so we want to assure you that we pray for you to be a great success. We want you to be known as having brought peace to the world, especially to have brought an end to the anguish of all in the Middle East. We pray that you will be known as having brought peace in all of these places where there is strife. You will have brought peace and no more need for Guantanamo Bay Detention Center. You have brought peace and we mourn the weeping as we do for the anguish of our sisters and brothers in the Middle East. We are bound to you. You belong to us. And your victory is our victory.

So thank you.

END 5:16 P.M. SAST



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