
PERSPECTIVES

Remarks at the University of Witwatersrand

By

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

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I have been looking forward to visiting Witwatersrand University. This is a place with a remarkable history, and it is an honor for me to be before you this afternoon. For nearly eighty years, you have stood for academic excellence, you have stood for equality in a time when it was very difficult to do so. You have stood for opportunity. And above all, you have stood for the future. And it is the future that I want to talk to you about today, your future, the future of South Africa, the future of Africa as a whole, and the future of the world that Americans and Africans will share together with all the other peoples of the world. A future that your generation will inherit, but also one that each of you can help to make. Unquestionably, you will inherit lingering problems from the past, but you will also benefit from the progress of recent years.

Your generation is the first to have come of age in a free, democratic and pluralistic South Africa. Yours is the last generation to have experienced the shame and daily humiliation of apartheid. The generations of men and women who came before you, your grandparents and parents and aunts and uncles, changed their own lives and your lives, and the destiny of an entire nation was changed because they dared to hope and they dared to act. And soon it will be up to the new generation, being educated here, to hope and to act. America will hope with you. America will act alongside you. America will be with you every step of the way into the future.

As President Bush put it in his inaugural address, America engages with the world by history and by choice. We share a proud heritage with every ethnic group on the planet. We are a nation of nations. We also choose to engage, because in today's world, America's prosperity and well-being are linked ever more closely to the growth of freedom, opportunity and security everywhere in the world. And I am here today to say on behalf of President Bush that Africa matters to America, by history and by choice.

We have almost 35 million citizens of African descent. Last year, the total United States and African trade approached \$30 billion, and America is Africa's largest single market. The United States is the leading foreign investor in Africa. Over 30,000 Africans are studying in the United States today. Our pasts, our presents and our futures are closely intertwined. As America's 65th Secretary of State and her only African-American Secretary of State so far, I will enthusiastically engage with Africa on behalf of the American people.

Only seven years ago in 1994, when most of the students here were teenagers, I had the privilege of being on the American delegation to President Mandela's inauguration. Chancellor Goldstone and I shared the stage at that time, and we were together for a brief period of time. I had the great privilege of experiencing in that rare moment, when you could see and feel history being made in front of your eyes, you could feel it under your feet. As an African-American, I

was proud; as a member of the human race, I was inspired; as a student of world affairs, I was thrilled by this act of national reconciliation.

All of you will have your memories of that day. My memory is a very specific one. I waited out in front of the Union Building with so many thousands of others. I could hear the swelling noise below the hill, as tens upon tens of thousands of people waited. And then finally the moment came when the announcer said, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the new president of the new South Africa, Nelson Mandela. And as the cheers got even louder and I could see out of the corner of my eye Mr. Mandela approach the stage, I noticed suddenly that he was not coming up alone. In front of him were four white generals of the South African Defense Force, as his escort, as his guard of honor, showing their allegiance to their new president. And as a general and as a soldier, I saw that. I truly knew I was watching history being made. I knew that something remarkable was happening that day, and something remarkable would be happening in the days that followed. And in the seven years since that historic day, remarkable things have happened. South Africa has emerged totally from decades of international isolation and domestic turmoil. You have had a peaceful transition of power, from President Mandela to President Mbeki. You have extended democracy to the grassroots through local elections. You have adopted and given force to a model constitution. You have embraced open markets and initiated economic reforms. You have shown the world that revolutionary change can be made without violence, that great injustices can be redressed without revenge, that diversity does not have to be divisive.

And you have been working with other African nations and the international community as a whole to end conflict in troubled parts of this continent. You still have your problems, you still have your challenges. But you have accomplished so very, very much as a new nation. You have achieved all of this and more in seven short years. And seven years from now, or seventeen years from now, when your generation will have come into its own, what kind of South Africa, what kind of Africa, what kind of world will we see? What kind of world will you have helped to shape? The spread of democracy and market economies and breakthroughs in technology permit us all to dream of a day when, for the first time in history, most of humanity will be free of the ravages of tyranny and poverty. It is well within the reach of that possibility, it is well within the reach of your generation.

Nelson Mandela once said, "People do not want freedom without bread, nor do they want bread without freedom." The unfettered and the well-fed have argued endlessly over which option, freedom or bread, people ought to take if they had to make a choice. But can any of us really know what we would do until we ourselves, or worse yet our families, were faced with such a desperate choice? But I can say this: free trade is the powerful instrument of freedom. A vibrant and dynamic market is the most powerful force for economic growth and sustainable development. This is not ideology talking; the facts speaking for themselves, and they tell us that free trade means bread, bread for the neediest of our people. That is why we will work energetically with our African friends through the *Africa Growth and Opportunity Act* to help drive trade expansion, remove barriers to growth, and attract investment.

Just last week, President Bush announced that the United States will be pleased to host the first ministerial level U.S.-Sub-Saharan Africa trade and economic cooperation forum this fall in Washington, DC. We will also champion the Southern African Development Community's efforts to promote stabilizing economic integration in the region. I note that Southern African Development Community plans to work toward establishing a free trade area among its members, and we applaud that effort. America's own very positive experience with the North American Free Trade Agreement led President Bush just this month to join with thirty-three other democratic leaders to launch negotiations for such an agreement for the entire Western Hemisphere. And I can envision that someday this continent will reach the stage where free trade

will link all the nations of Africa. Sustainable economic development depends on wise management of the environment, as well as trade liberalization and sound governance. My government is engaged in a wide variety of efforts at the bilateral and multilateral levels with non-government organizations and with industry, aimed at conservation and responsible management of Africa's precious natural resources. And we very much look forward to the world summit on sustainable development, which South Africa is hosting in 2002. In addition to our substantial bilateral assistance programs, the United States government also plays a leading role in fostering self-propelled African growth and development through the capacity-building efforts of the international financial institutions and the United Nations agencies that are hard at work in this effort. I cannot state strongly enough, however, that all over the world experience has shown has shown that trade and private investment have to go hand in hand with openness within a country. Trade and private investment, hand in hand with openness in a country, lead to growth and to development. Money, simply stated, is a coward. Capital will run from those countries which are closed, which are corrupt, which do not have open systems, which do not believe in the rule of law, which are callous or which are caught up in conflict. Money loves security; money loves transparency, legality and stability. Create those conditions in any country, and money will flow in, that money will produce wealth, wealth that will benefit all the peoples, or can be made to benefit all the peoples within that nation.

Only when societies embrace sound economic and trade policies, when they embrace the rule of law, when they practice good governance, and when they can give official assistance and private investment working together the opportunity to play effective roles in development, then we can see the kind of success that we need, the kind of opportunity that will draw in more private investment.

We are, of course, aware that many nations straining to lift their people out of poverty also struggle under external and domestic debt burdens, serious debt burdens. As part of our efforts to promote development, America is leading international efforts to reduce debts of the poorest and most heavily indebted countries as they embrace sound policies and commit themselves to using the savings from debt relief to improve the lives of ordinary citizens through investments in education and health, and other sectors of society that increase growth and alleviate poverty.

Under this initiative, my government has already committed to forgo 100 percent of the bilateral debt owed to us by nineteen African nations. We will forgive that debt. Fortunately, Africa's most far-sighted leaders have come to realize what leaders all over the world are recognizing: that sustainable development is closely linked to wise economic policies and democratic, accountable government. If you take a good look around, the most successful countries are those where militaries understand their subordinate role under civilians in a democratic society. Where governments do not oppose peaceful opposition with force, but instead engage them with ideas, debate in the field of ideas, not the field of force. Where journalists who exercise their right to free expression are not sent on express journeys to jail. Where big men do not define foreign investment as depositing stolen billions in foreign banks. And where the model for democratic participation is one person, one vote, and frequently elections allow people to change their minds every few years as to the manner in which they will be governed.

The true test of a democracy is not the first election or the second or the third; democracy takes root when leaders step down peacefully, when they are voted out of office or when their terms expire. And here, the trends are encouraging. President Diouf in Senegal, Viera of Cape Verde; President Konare of Mali respects term limits, I met with him the other day; President Rawlings also respected term limits in Ghana. We applaud President Chiluba's recent decision to step down at the end of his term. He came to office through free and fair elections, and he will secure his democratic legacy by leaving office in keeping with his country's constitution.

There are, however, many who seem reluctant to submit to the law and the will of the people. After more than twenty years in office, Zimbabwean President Mugabe seems determined to remain in power. As you know, it is for the citizens of Zimbabwe to choose their leader in a free and fair election, and they should be given one so that they can make their choice as to how they will be governed in the future. That is why your model is so important. That is why your experience is so important as an example to the rest of the world and the rest of the continent. The manner in which you transferred power was such an honor for all of us to watch first President Mandela and then President Mbeki take over in that peaceful transformation. And the president and I had good conversations last night about all the issues that you would imagine, regional issues. And I respect him so much, and I was so pleased to convey to him President Bush's invitation for him to visit Washington on June 26th. I can tell you, the American people are anxious to see your president arrive in Washington next month. He will have a great time, I can assure you of that.

It is very simple. The proposition is very simple. As Nigeria's President Obasanjo once put it: "Nigeria's people," he said, "yearn for honest, transparent and accountable leadership that they can trust, from which they can derive inspiration for hard work, and which fully utilizes their talents and capabilities." That's all people ask for. Across this continent, America is working with African governments and international and local non-government organizations to promote and strengthen civil societies, human rights, the rule of law and genuine democratic government. For example, United States funded efforts are building the capacity of Uganda's parliament. America is helping rebuild Rwanda's justice system after the genocide, and enhancing the role of women in building a tolerant civil society. We are helping to promote civilian oversight of the military and the reforming of the police in Nigeria. And here in South Africa, we are providing technical assistance in your drafting of the landmark civil rights legislation required by your constitution. America will continue to work with African countries in these and so many other ways to foster the political and economic conditions critical to growth. As President Bush said when he addressed his first joint session of Congress, "We will work with our allies and friends to be a force for good and a champion of freedom. We will work for free markets, free trade and freedom from oppression. Nations making progress towards freedom will find that America is their friend."

As we look into the future, a decade or two from now, I hope that in addition to greater democracy and economic growth, we will see a continent at peace, that the devastating conflicts that rage today in the Congo, the Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Angola, the Horn and the Great Lakes region, will have long since been resolved. Tragically, the millions who have already perished in these conflicts are lost to the future. They are lost to Africa. We will never know the gifts that they may have brought to Africa and the gifts they may have given to all humanity. And to the millions more who are now among the driven and displaced, the future means little more than survival from one day to the next.

The United States will continue to work with our African friends to ease the suffering. We will continue to build on America's proud tradition of leadership in meeting the needs of the world's refugees and displaced. So that humanitarian crises can be prevented and not just relieved, we place great importance on addressing the underlying causes of conflict: poverty, inequality, intolerance, weak civil society, bad governance. We will redouble our efforts within the international community to curb trade, which fuels violence, such as trafficking in conflict diamonds and weapons. We must all do more to heal war-torn societies so that violence does not recur. The legacies of war, land mines and still-armed and unemployed ex-combatants continue to inflict suffering and undermine stability long after peace accords are signed. We are working with a dozen African nations to build a capacity to clear land mines and to assist their victims. And we support programs throughout the continent to disarm and demobilize former combatants and reintegrate them into society. Often the combatants themselves are the victims of conflict,

including children who have been forced to put their schoolbooks aside and to pick up AK-47s. Meanwhile, we will continue to work with the international community to resolve ongoing conflicts. The United States is actively supporting the December 2000 peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, as well as the United Nations peacekeeping missions in Congo and Sierra Leone. We also support peace-building missions in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and the Central African Republic. Through Operation Focus Relief, we are helping to prepare seven West African battalions for service in Sierra Leone.

Looking beyond these immediate conflicts, we support Africa's own regional efforts through Economic Council of West African States, and hopefully through the Southern Africa Development Community as well, to develop greater indigenous peacekeeping capability. Because at the end of the day, African regional forces are the best ones, best equipped and best able to deal with some of the conflict and peacekeeping situations that we find on the continent. Based on a series of discussions I have had since January with leading protagonists in the Congo conflict, for example, I am cautiously optimistic about the efforts under way to implement the Lusaka Agreement to bring peace to Congo. It is important that progress be achieved on three key fronts:

- disengagement of forces
- national dialogue
- demobilization and disarmament of negative forces operating in the Congo.

I want to state very clearly to the people of Congo that the United States will not support any outcome that does not preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Congo. Partition will not bring lasting peace, and we will not support it. A peaceful solution to Burundi's internal conflict is also critical to overall stability in the Great Lakes region. We are grateful for South Africa's mediation efforts, and we fully support those efforts. And we will remain very closely engaged with our African partners in seeking to prevent an already dangerous situation from descending into chaos and catastrophe.

Many Americans, not least President Bush, are deeply concerned by events in Sudan, the scene of Africa's longest-running civil war and one of its bloodiest. Addressing humanitarian needs, ending human rights abuses and Sudan's support for international terrorism are all problems that have to be dealt with, and all sides need to work together to create a viable peace process to bring these problems to an end and to move Sudan in a more positive direction. The United States plans to take more action on our side to help with the humanitarian situation in the Sudan. We have just appointed the new United States Agency for International Development Administrator, Mr. Andrew Natsios, as Special Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan. The United States is planning to appoint a special envoy to work on the peace process and to work for reconciliation within the Sudan.

The United States will be a friend to all Africans who seek peace. But we cannot make peace among Africans. Peace is not a foreign concept here, nor can it be a foreign import. Africans themselves must bear the lion's share of the responsibility for bringing stability to the continent. And I am so pleased that, especially here in South Africa, President Mbeki understands that and is working hard on conflict resolution throughout the continent. All the efforts that Africans and Americans make together, from fostering good governance and economic reform to promoting stability, will come to little unless African countries make deep growth-supporting infrastructure investments. We are therefore encouraged by the Millennium Partnership for Africa Recovery Plan, advanced by President Mbeki and other African leaders, which emphasizes fundamental issues of governance, economic management and infrastructure.

For much of Africa, problems with the quality and quantity of available transportation, potable water and electricity systems pose serious obstacles to development and growth. Firms, farms and factories cannot be started where there is no power grid or access to water. Goods cannot be delivered where there are no roads or trails to markets or to ports. Here again, experience shows that private investment is the most effective way to solve these problems. And so we strongly support the role international financial institutions play, including identifying needs and helping create the conditions that enable private sector involvement in infrastructure projects. American companies are active in this area across the continent, in sectors such as communication, safe power, health, agricultural development and transportation. More fundamental to success than sound infrastructure, however, is the well-being of Africa's greatest resource, its people. Young democracies depend on informed citizens. Growing economies depend on skilled labor and skilled management. To help free the enormous potential of the 800 million men and women of Africa, the United States is engaged in scores of education programs throughout the continent through the United States Agency for International Development, the Peace Corps, United States-based non-government organizations colleges and foundations. For example, the United States government launched the Africa-wide Education for Development and Democratization Initiative back in 1998 to give special attention to the needs of girls and women, to enhance the availability of technology for education and promote citizen participation in democratic governments. I am delighted that before the end of this year, Witwaterstrand will launch Africa's first international relations center with grants from United States-based foundations. Not only will the center welcome students from across the continent, it will send South African exchange students to other African countries to broaden their perspectives and to enrich their knowledge.

From time to time, perhaps we need to have an indaba or council meeting with African countries all coming together to discuss education and skills training and to assess what more we can do together especially for young people. This certainly includes bridging the digital divide. I am an internet addict. I live on the internet. And before I left home on this trip to Africa, I was surfing around and came across AfriCare's website. It features the digital village in Soweto which I just visited this afternoon, which provides community-based net access that promotes literacy and job training. This is the kind of investment we need to prepare young people for the future. In its first year, the Soweto digital village equipped more than five hundred children and young adults with the computer skills they need to compete for the jobs that are waiting for them in the 21st century economy. More digital villages are opening every year, and I am glad to report that AfriCare's very, very able leader, Mr. C. Payne Lucas, has found corporate partners in Microsoft, Eastman-Kodak, Hewlett Packard, Intel and the St. Paul Companies. AfriCare also hopes to use the centers to further its AIDS education and awareness work.

So much promise, so much progress here in South Africa and across this continent. So much has been done, and so much more yet to be done. Yet, it all can be undone by the unchecked plague of HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases. The AIDS crisis is not just a health crisis across this continent, it is an economic crisis, a social crisis, a crisis for democracy, a threat to stability, a threat to the very future of Africa because it is decimating the very people who build that more prosperous, democratic, peaceful future that I have been speaking about. More 25 million African infected with HIV/AIDS, over 17 million deaths. Last year alone, there were almost 4 million new cases and 2 1/2 million deaths. In several Southern Africa countries, the adult infection rate exceeds twenty percent. The figures are both numbing and shocking, but each statistic has a name, a face, a family, a story. Probably many of you in the audience today have been touched by such a story.

I heard many of them earlier today at a place called The Village of Hope, sponsored by Hope Worldwide. Hope lives even where life is at its most precarious. I see it now in the AIDS wards of Africa, and I have seen it in the foxholes of war. The capacity to hope, to hope that we can

make something better, to hope that we can improve, to hope that we can fight these kinds of diseases. This capacity for hope is what makes us human. Let us be clear, our enemy is the HIV virus that causes AIDS. Our enemy is not its victims. All who carry HIV deserve compassion, not ostracism. They deserve to be treated with dignity, not disdain. All who combat this dread disease must work in greater concert. And I will say to you that the people of Africa are the key to fighting HIV/AIDS in Africa. Opinion leaders can send life-saving messages about people taking responsibility for their own behavior and about ending the stigmatization of the afflicted. The international basketball star, Congo's Dikembe Mutombo, is doing just that. Our first objective, he said, "is to find a way to solve the problem by preventing the spread of AIDS among men, and mostly we have to start with education." He went on to say, "And something is bothering us as Africans, the breaking of the silence. We have to come to the point to stop the taboo that is preventing us from talking about AIDS in our homes, in our families and in our communities. It is so important that we face this crisis with a sense of reality." People at all levels of society must stand up and be counted. Just as your Student Representative Council did here at Witwatersrand when in an inspiring act of personal and civic courage, they publicly had themselves tested for HIV/AIDS, and I salute them for that courage.

At the OAU summit in Abuja, African leaders pledged to give the fight against HIV/AIDS the highest priority in their national development plans. They pledged to increase resources from their own budgets for infectious diseases, and they supported the creation of a global fund to combat these deadly scourges. For our part, the United States has been and will continue to be the largest bilateral donor against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. On May 11th, President Bush announced the United States is prepared to commit an additional \$200 million to a global trust fund. We hope that this funding and the initiatives taken by others will catalyze the world community to more effective action. This is just the beginning. We will do more in the years ahead, and we will ask to do even more with partners by leveraging up our contribution to get others in the private sector, the business sector, private citizens to contribute to this global trust fund. We believe that only an integrated approach makes sense, an approach that emphasizes public education and prevention, but also includes treatment of the sick and care for AIDS orphans. It includes affordable drugs, effective delivery systems, training of medical professionals and research into possible cures. All of these elements must and will be actively pursued. But I will tell you that unless a strong emphasis is put on prevention, prevention and more prevention, the pandemic will continue to rage out of control. I am equally convinced that if all concerned adopt the right approach and combine our resources, we can stem the tide of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases in your generation.

When President Mandela cast his historic vote in 1994 in South Africa's first democratic election, he spoke Dr. Martin Luther King's words that Dr. King presented at the Lincoln Memorial, "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, free at last." Through vicious crowds and attack dogs and tear gas and billy clubs and fire hoses, African-Americans marched with Dr. King armed only with faith, conviction and song. In the words of the old spiritual, they kept on walking and talking while their minds stayed on freedom. And from the path their minds had set upon, their feet would not be turned. Your parents' generation had their minds set on freedom, and thanks to them, they followed the spirit of Martin Luther King and the followed the leadership of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki and so many others. As a result of their sacrifice and as a result of the fact that their feet would not be turned, your generation is free, free to be and free to do, free to use your excellent education to seize opportunities for yourselves, for your country, and for the people of this continent. I hope that your generation of Africans will have your minds set on the future and that you will not be turned from your path. I hope that you will not be discouraged by those who refuse to recognize Africa's potential. Your generation can prove them wrong. I hope that you will not be deluded by those who cling to bankrupt ideologies or who still view the world through the old 20th century prism. They will only delay your progress. In this new century, America no longer sees the world as East versus West, and in this increasingly inter-

dependent globalized world, we should no longer see Africa as North versus South. We are all one. We are all connected and we are all together.

Finally, I hope that today I will leave you in no doubt that the United States is committed by history and by choice to a mutually productive, long-term engagement with Africa. No one who has ever witnessed an African dawn can fail to believe in the future of Africa. Even the least romantic of souls is moved to metaphor. There have been countless magnificent African dawns here since the very morning of human kind. And many a daybreak, including some in your young lifetime, have brought incalculable African contributions to world civilization. We also know that this morning millions of African men, women and children again awoken to disease, destitution and despair. That is why I will not end my speech with just a rosy vision of dawn. It is far more useful to present a cleared-eye picture of the challenges that the people of Africa will face in the days ahead and include the challenges of building democracy, of creating free and prosperous market economies, of securing peace, of establishing the conditions for sustainable development. These challenges are not unique to Africa or even to America, but Africa must find her own means of meeting them with our help.

And so I ask all of you, all of you, to imagine this continent twenty, perhaps thirty years from now. Let's dream of an Africa of vibrant democracies, from the Sahel in the north to SADC in the south, from Economic Council of West African States in the west to the East Africa Cooperation entity in the east and every place in between. Let's dream of an Africa of economies thriving in global markets that stretch from Pretoria to Paris, Nairobi to New York, Timbuktu to Tokyo. A continent of countries at peace within their own borders and at peace with their neighbors. Let us dream of that. Let us dream of a continent where for the first time the majority of the her people have access to decent schools and medical facilities, to safe drinking water, to good roads and railways, to electricity and, yes, to the Internet. That Africa, which we should dream about today, is within your generation's reach, and America is committed to helping you reach it. In closing, my question to you, and to all the other well-educated members of your generation throughout this continent, is not whether such an Africa is possible but, instead, what will you do to make it happen? It is in your hands, and I know that you will do your part. You will do everything to bring about the promise that God has put in this marvelous continent. I thank you so very much.