

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 22, 2011

Lokangaka Losambe
400 Old Mill
Burlington, Vermont 05405

Dear Lokangaka:

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. Many Americans have written to me about human rights around the world, and I appreciate your perspective.

The United States was founded on the principles of freedom and equality, and our history is marked with triumphs and struggles in fulfilling these timeless ideals. Our task is never finished, and protecting these core values is a shared obligation and a priority for my Administration. No nation should be silent in the fight against human rights violations. When innocents in places like Sudan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo are raped or murdered, it is a stain on our collective conscience. I am committed to reinvigorating America's leadership on a range of international human rights issues.

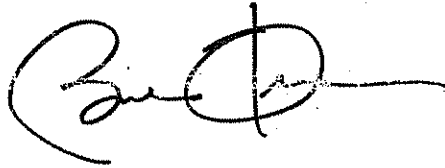
As the struggle for human rights continues around the world, we have witnessed an extraordinary change in the Middle East and North Africa. Country by country, people have risen up across this region to demand their basic human rights; too often, these calls for change have been answered by violence. The United States opposes the use of violence and repression against these men and women. Rather, we support a set of universal rights, including free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of religion, equality for men and women under the rule of law, and the right of people to choose their own leaders. We also support political and economic reform in the Middle East and North Africa that can meet the legitimate aspirations of ordinary people throughout the region. While change may not come easily, America will stand squarely on the side of those who are reaching for their rights, knowing their success will bring about a world that is more peaceful, more stable, and more just.

As you may know, the United States has joined the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) and is working to make this body as effective as possible. My Administration will also advocate for human rights in other international settings. In our relations with other countries, the issue of human rights will continue to be raised as clearly, persistently, and effectively as possible. Among other things, we will continue to promote accountability for

mass atrocities, respect for the rights of minorities and women, freedom of association and speech, and the freedom for people to live as they choose and love whom they chose.

Our commitment to human rights is an essential element of American foreign policy and one of our best national security assets. Through it, we will help to shut down torture chambers, replace tyranny with good governance, and enlist free nations in the common cause of liberty. To learn more about my Administration's human rights agenda, please visit www.HumanRights.gov or www.WhiteHouse.gov/CPO. Thank you, again, for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.