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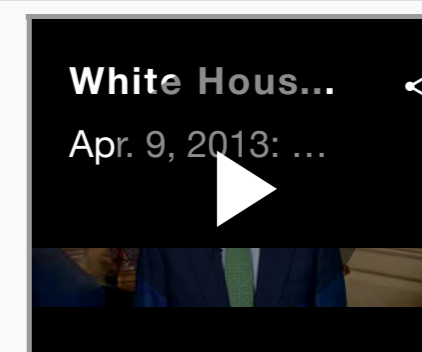
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## White House Forum To Combat Human Trafficking

Remarks  
**John Kerry**  
**Secretary of State**  
**Washington, DC**  
**April 9, 2013**

This video is also available with closed captioning on YouTube.



Good morning, everyone. I'm really sorry that I'm not able to be with you today to celebrate some of the real heroes in the fight against modern slavery. I think you know that I'm traveling to the Mideast and to a ministerial meeting in London, but I wanted to be able to share with you all personally how committed I am to this struggle, and how grateful I am for all your tireless efforts.

Here and around the world, trafficking in persons destroys lives. It threatens communities. It creates instability. It undermines the rule of law. And it is a horrendous assault on our most dearly held values of freedom and basic human dignity. We, along with every nation, bear the responsibility to confront modern slavery by punishing traffickers and helping survivors get their lives back on track.

This issue is one that demands our intense focus and it's been important to me for a long time now. As a prosecutor years ago, I learned firsthand how the victims of sexual violence are often violated by the system, if it responds at all. I saw personally the look in their eyes when they wondered whether they'd ever be treated fairly in the courts or see their abusers brought to justice. As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I'm proud that we held the Committee's first-ever hearing on trafficking in order to shine light on the reality of this modern slavery, and to put it on the agenda of the Congress and of the American people. And now as Secretary of State, I am deeply committed to building on those efforts.

So is President Obama. Under the President's leadership, we have ramped up investigations and prosecutions of trafficking cases, we've expanded our diplomatic engagement around the world, and we've developed a new action plan to provide assistance and services to survivors, and supported new innovations that will improve the way that we respond to this crime. As Chair of the President's Task Force on Trafficking, I intend to keep up this momentum, to grow it, and to move our efforts forward.

Of course, we all know that government alone is not going to solve this problem. That's where all of you—our partners—come in. Whether you represent a civil society group helping victims on the ground, or a corporation working to eliminate trafficking from its supply chain, or a faith community spurring a congregation to action, the work that every single one of you are doing every single day is making a huge difference.

With this Presidential Award, we honor those who have played an extraordinary role in advancing our common cause. They have been pioneers in this effort—from developing the 3P approach of prevention, protection, and prosecution in the earliest days of the movement, to championing innovations in corporate social responsibility that will help to carry this work forward for years to come. This award pays tribute to their leadership and to their commitment.

So let me close by simply saying thank you to all of you. Thank you for all that you have done, and I ask that you stay focused on this critical task. With your continued support and dedication, we are moving closer and closer every day to our shared vision of a world finally free from slavery.



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