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PAGE
MISSING

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Dear President Museveni,

As you are both a personal friend and an important partner for my government, I wanted to communicate directly with you about my decision to return to the private sector.

After two years in service to the Administration of President Obama and my friend Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, I have decided it is time for me to return to the activities I know best -- finding opportunities for investment and business that help build strong economies and promote development. Working for President Obama and Secretary Clinton has been an honor, but it is time for me to return to the city -- New York -- and the work that I most enjoy. I look forward to joining my son Brian, who you met on my last visit to Uganda, and finding new opportunities for investment in Africa and other regions of the world.

As a friend and a potential investor in Africa, I must tell you that I am concerned about recent events in Uganda that have tarnished Uganda's image and raised questions about the country's commitment to respect the rights of all its citizens. The reaction to recent "walk to work" protests, efforts to rein in the free press, and the security forces' treatment of Dr. Kizza Besigye are the most visible signs of an overreaction to what appears to be a peaceful political protest. As you and I have discussed, I am also concerned about the protection of gay and lesbian citizens, whose rights have been challenged by parliamentarians seeking to criminalize their status. Tolerance for dissent and political dialogue seems to be decreasing, which hurts Uganda's hard-won reputation as a just society and good place to invest and do business.

I am also concerned on a personal level about how you are perceived in handling these events. You know from our work together when I was at Discovery that I have been a great fan and admirer of your many accomplishments. From your fight against the tyranny of your predecessors to your invitation to Asians to return to Uganda, your leadership on the HIV/AIDS issue, and your work to build strong democratic institutions have marked you as one of the great leaders of modern Africa. I do not want to see that proud record of accomplishment tarnished.

I urge you to think of your legacy and to dedicate the remainder of your time in government to strengthening democracy in Uganda, putting in place a transparent and credible transition process, and preparing a strong democratic foundation, based on law, for the generations of Ugandan leaders that follow. In doing so, you will provide a model of 21st century leadership not only for the citizens of Uganda but for young people across Africa and around the world.