

Select Excerpts of:
U.S. President Barack H. Obama's speech
at New Delhi's Siri Fort Auditorium

January 27, 2015



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuvQ6-IPDAc>

At 22mins:30secs spoke on Secularism:

- “Our nations are strongest when we see that we are all God’s children, all equal in His eyes and worthy of His love.”
- “Across our two great countries, we have Hindus and Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Jews and Buddhists, and Jains and so many faiths.”
- “And we remember the wisdom of Gandhiji who said: ‘For me the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they are branches from the same majestic tree.’”
- “Our **freedom of religion** is written into our founding documents. **Its part of America’s very first amendment.**

Your article 25 says that ‘All people are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and the **right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.**”

- “... **Upholding this freedom of religion is the responsibility of government, but its also the responsibility of every person.**”
- “There were times when my faith has been questioned by people who do not know me, or they have said I adhere to a different religion as if that was a bad thing.”
- “No society is immune from the darkest impulses of man, and too often religion has been used to tap in to those darker impulses as opposed to the light of God.”
- “...**every person has the right to practice their faith how they choose**, or to practice no faith at all and to do so **free of persecution and fear and discrimination.**”

At 25mins:09secs spoke on **Secularism with focus on India:**

- “The **peace we seek in the world** begins in human hearts and it finds its glorious expression **when we look beyond any differences in religion** or tribe and rejoice in the beauty of every soul.”
- “And no where is that more important than India. No where is it going to be more necessary for that foundation value to be upheld. **India will succeed so long as it is not splintered along the lines of religious faith**, so long as it is not splintered along any lines, and is unified as one nation.”
- “And its when all Indians – whatever your faith – go to the movies and applaud actors like Shahrukh Khan, and when you celebrate athletes like Milkha Singh or Mary Kom .”
- “... Do we act with compassion and empathy. Are we measured by our efforts, by what Dr. King called the content of our character, rather than the color of our skins or the manner by which we worship our God.”
- “In both our countries our diversity is our strength, **and we have to guard against any effort to divide ourselves along sectarian lines or any other lines.**”
- “... If India, as massive as it is, with so much diversity, so many differences, is to continually affirm its democracy, that is an example for every other country on earth. That’s what makes us world leaders, not just size of our economy or the number of weapons we have.

But our ability to show the way in how we work together, and how much respect we show each other.”

At 27mins:50secs **Message to India’s Youth:**

- “And finally **our nations are strongest when we empower our young people**, because **ultimately you are the ones who had to break down their old stereotypes, and these old barriers, these old ways of thinking.**”
- “**Prejudices and stereotypes and assumptions, those are what happens to old minds...** like mine.”
- “Here in India most people are under 35 years old. And India is on track to become the most populous country. Young Indians like you are not just going to define this nation, you are going to shape the world.”

First 15 minutes:

- “Relationship between India and the US can be one of the defining partnership of the 21st century.”
- “India represents an intersection of **2 men who have always inspired me**”... Reverend **Dr. Martin Luther King**, and **Mahatma Gandhi**.
- “Having thrown off colonialism, we created Constitutions that began with the same words: ‘We the people.’”
- “United States has the largest Indian diaspora in the world, including some 3 million Indian Americans.”
- “I support a reformed UN Security Council that includes India as a member.”

At 15mins:30secs spoke on Equality:

- “Progress depends on how we see each other.”
- “We know from experience what makes a nation strong.”
- “We are strongest when we see the inherent dignity in every human being”
- “Your Constitution begins with the pledge to uphold ‘the dignity of the individual’.”
- “There were moments in my life where I have been treated differently because of the color of my skin.”
- “Many countries, including the US, grapple with questions of identity and inequality, and how we treat each other, people who are different that us... **how we deal with diversity of beliefs and of faiths.**”
- “The aim of our work must not be to have a few do well, but to have everybody have a chance.”
- “Our nations are strongest when we uphold the equality of all people, and that includes our women.”

[Concluded]