

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2016*

## **The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada**

*March 10, 2016*

*President Obama.* Thank you, everybody. Please have a seat. Well, once again, I want to welcome Prime Minister Trudeau to the White House. We just completed a very productive meeting. Although I regret to inform you that we still have not reached agreement on hockey. [Laughter] But it is not interfering with the rest of our bilateral relationship. [Laughter]

As I said earlier, this visit reflects something we Americans don't always say enough, and that is, how much we value our great alliance and partnership with our friends up north. We're woven together so deeply—as societies, as economies—that it's sometimes easy to forget how truly remarkable our relationship is. A shared border—more than 5,000 miles—that is the longest between any two nations in the world. Every day, we do some \$2 billion in trade and investment, and that's the largest bilateral economic relationship in the world. Every day, more than 400,000 Americans and Canadians cross the border: workers, businesspeople, students, tourists, neighbors. And of course, every time we have a Presidential election, our friends to the north have to brace for an exodus of Americans who swear they'll move to Canada if the guy from the other party wins. [Laughter] And so—but typically, it turns out fine. [Laughter]

This is now my second meeting with Justin. I'm grateful that I have him as a partner. We've got a common outlook on what our nations can achieve together. He campaigned on a message of hope and of change. His positive and optimistic vision is inspiring young people. At home, he's governing with a commitment to inclusivity and equality. On the world stage, his country is leading on climate change, and he cares deeply about development. So, from my perspective, what's not to like?

Of course, no two nations agree on everything. Our countries are no different. But in terms of our interests, our values, how we approach the world, few countries match up the way the United States and Canada do. And given our work together today, I can say—and I believe the Prime Minister would agree—that when it comes to the central challenges that we face, our two nations are more closely aligned than ever.

We want to make it easier to trade and invest with one another. America is already the top destination for Canadian exports, and Canada is the top market for U.S. exports, which support about 1.7 million good-paying American jobs. When so many of our products, like autos, are built on both sides of the border in an integrated supply chain, this coproduction makes us more competitive in the global economy as a whole. And we want to keep it that way.

So we've instructed our teams to stay focused on making it even easier for goods and people to move back and forth across the borders, including reducing bottlenecks and streamlining regulations. We discussed how to move forward with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and today we also reaffirmed our determination to move ahead with an agreement to preclear travelers through immigration and customs, making it even easier for Canadians and Americans to travel and visit and do business together.

As NATO allies, we're united against the threat of terrorism. Canada is an extraordinarily valued member of the global coalition fighting ISIL, tripling its personnel to help train and advise forces in Iraq, stepping up its intelligence efforts in the region, and providing critical

humanitarian support. We're working closely together to prevent the flow of foreign fighters, and today we agreed to share more information—including with respect to our no-fly lists and full implementation of our entry-exit system—even as we uphold the privacy and civil liberties of our respective citizens.

In Syria, the cessation of hostilities has led to a measurable drop in violence in the civil war, and the United States and Canada continue to be leaders in getting humanitarian aid to Syrians who are in desperate need. Meanwhile, our two countries continue to safely welcome refugees from that conflict. And I want to commend Justin and the Canadian people once again for their compassionate leadership on this front.

I'm especially pleased to say the United States and Canada are fully united in combating climate change. As the first U.S. President to visit the Arctic, I saw how both of our nations are threatened by rising seas, melting permafrost, disappearing glaciers and sea ice. And so we are focusing on making sure the Paris Agreement is fully implemented, and we're working to double our investments in clean energy research and development.

Today we're also announcing some new steps. Canada is joining us in our aggressive goal to bring down methane emissions in the oil and gas sectors in both of our countries, and together, we're going to move swiftly to establish comprehensive standards to meet that goal. We're also going to work together to phase down HFCs and to limit carbon emissions from international aviation. We're announcing a new climate and science partnership to protect the Arctic and its people. And later this year, I'll welcome our partners, including Canada, to our White House science ministerial on the Arctic to deepen our cooperation in this vital region.

We're also grateful for Canada's partnership as we renew America's leadership across the hemisphere. Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you for Canada's continuing support for our new chapter of engagement with the Cuban people, which I will continue with my upcoming visit to Cuba next week. We're going to work to help Colombia achieve peace and remove the deadly legacy of landmines there. And our scientists and public health professionals will work with partners across the hemisphere to prevent the spread of the Zika virus and work together actively for diagnostic and vaccines that can make a real difference.

And finally, our shared values—our commitment to human development and dignity of all people—continue to guide our work as global partners. Through the Global Health Security Agenda, we're stepping up our efforts to prevent outbreaks of diseases from becoming epidemics. We are urgently working to help Ethiopia deal with the worst drought in half a century. Today our spouses, Michelle and Sophie, are reaffirming our commitment to the health and education of young women and girls around the world. And Canada will be joining our Power Africa initiative to bring electricity—including renewable energy—to homes and businesses across the continent and help lift people out of poverty. And those are our values at work.

So again, Justin, I want to thank you for your partnership. I believe we've laid a foundation for even greater cooperation for our countries for years to come. And I'd like to think that it is only the beginning. I look forward to welcoming you back for the Nuclear Security Summit in a few weeks. I'm pleased that we were able to announce that the next North American Leaders' Summit that will be in Canada this summer. The Prime Minister has invited me to address the Canadian Parliament, and that's a great honor. I look forward to the opportunity to speak directly to the Canadian people about the extraordinary future that we can build together.

Prime Minister Trudeau.

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Thank you, Mr. President.

Good morning, everyone. It's an honor to be here. As I've reflected on the storied relationship between our two great countries, I constantly return to President Kennedy's wise words on our friendship that "what unites us is far greater than what divides us." And as President Obama mentioned earlier, if geography made us neighbors, then shared values made us kindred spirits, and it is our choices, individually and collectively, that make us friends.

That friendship, matched by much hard work, has allowed us to do great things throughout our history, from the beaches of Normandy to the free trade agreement and now, today, on climate change. The President and I share a common goal: We want a clean-growth economy that continues to provide good jobs and great opportunities for all of our citizens. And I'm confident that by working together, we'll get there sooner than we think.

Let's take the Paris Agreement, for example. That agreement is both a symbolic declaration of global cooperation on climate change, as well as a practical guide for growing our economies in a responsible and sustainable way. Canada and the U.S. have committed to signing the agreement as soon as possible. We know that our international partners expect and, indeed, need leadership from us on this issue.

The President and I have announced today that we'll take ambitious action to reduce methane emissions nearly by half from the oil and gas sector, reduce use and emissions of hydrofluorocarbons, and implement aligned greenhouse gas emission standards for heavy-duty vehicles, amongst other plans to fight climate change.

*[At this point, Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* We also announced a new partnership aiming to develop a sustainable economy in the Arctic. This partnership foresees new standards based on scientific data, from fishing in the high seas of the Arctic, as well as new standards to ensure maritime transport with less emissions. The partnership will also promote sustainable development in the region, in addition to putting the bar higher in terms of preserving the biodiversity in the Arctic.

We have also decided to make our borders both more open and more safe by agreeing of preclearing at the Billy Bishop Airport in Toronto and the Jean Lesage Airport in Quebec, as well as the railroad stations in Montreal and Vancouver. Moreover, we're creating a U.S.-Canada working group in the next 60 days on the recourses to access how we will resolve errors of identity on the no-fly list.

*[Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in English as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* The President and I acknowledge the fundamental and wholly unique economic relationship between Canada and the United States. We have, historically, been each other's largest trading partners. Each and every day, over \$2.4 billion worth of goods and services cross the border. Today we reaffirmed our commitment to streamlining trade between our countries.

Overall, the President and I agree on many things, including, of paramount importance, the direction we want to take our countries in to ensure a clean and prosperous future. We've made tremendous progress on many issues. Unfortunately, I will leave town with my beloved Expos still here in Washington. You can't have everything. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to conclude by extending my deepest thanks to Barack for his leadership on the climate change file to date. I want to assure the American people that they have a real partner in Canada. Canada and the U.S. will stand side by side to confront the pressing needs that face not only our two countries, but the entire planet.

I'm very much looking forward to the remainder of my time here in Washington. So thank you again for your leadership and your friendship. I know that our two countries can achieve great things by working together as allies and as friends, as we have done so many times before.

*Merci beaucoup, Barack.*

*President Obama.* All right, we're going to take a few questions. We'll start with Julie Davis [New York Times].

#### *Canada-U.S. Relations/U.S. Supreme Court Justice Nomination Process*

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to ask you about the Supreme Court. You've already said you're looking for a highly qualified nominee with impeccable credentials. Can you give us a sense of what other factors you're considering in making your final choice? How much of this comes down to a gut feeling for you? And does it affect your decision to know that your nominee is very likely to hang out in the public eye without hearings or a vote for a long time, or maybe ever? And frankly, shouldn't that be driving your decision if you're asking someone to put themselves forward for this position as this point?

For Prime Minister Trudeau, I wanted to ask you—we know you've been following our Presidential campaign here in the U.S. As the President alluded to, you've even made a joke about welcoming Americans who might be frightened of a Donald Trump Presidency to your country. What do you think the stakes are for you and for the relationship between Canada and the United States if Donald Trump or Ted Cruz were to win the Presidency and to succeed President Obama? You obviously see eye-to-eye with him on a lot of issues. What do you think—how would it affect the relationship if one of them were to succeed President Obama? Thank you.

*President Obama.* Even though it wasn't directed to me, let me just—[laughter]—I do want to point out I am absolutely certain that, in 2012, when there was the possibility that I might be reelected, there were folks who were threatening to go to Canada as well. And one of the great things about a relationship like Canada's and the United States is, it transcends party and it's bipartisan in terms of the interests that we share.

With respect to the Supreme Court, I've told you, Julie, what I'm looking for. I want somebody who is an outstanding jurist, who has impeccable legal credentials, who, by historical standards, would not even be questioned as qualified for the Court.

Obviously, it's somebody who I want to make sure follows the Constitution; cares about things like stare decisis and precedent; understands the necessary humility of a judge at any level in looking at statute, looking at what the elected branches are doing; is not viewing themselves as making law or, in some ways, standing above elected representatives, but also recognizes the critical role that that branch plays in protecting minorities, to ensuring that the political system doesn't skew in ways that systematically leave people out; that are mindful of the traditions that are embedded in our cherished documents like the Bill of Rights.

So in terms of who I select, I'm going to do my job. And then, my expectation is going to be that the Senate do its job as outlined in the Constitution. I've said this before: I find it ironic that people who are constantly citing the Constitution would suddenly read into the

Constitution requirements, norms, procedures that are nowhere to be found there. That's precisely the kinds of interpretive approach that they have vehemently rejected and that they accused liberals of engaging in all the time. Well, you can't abandon your principles—if in fact these are your principles—simply for the sake of political expedience.

So we'll see how they operate once a nomination has been made. I'm confident that whoever I select, among fairminded people, will be viewed as an eminently qualified person. And it will then be up to Senate Republicans to decide whether they want to follow the Constitution and abide by the rules of fair play that ultimately undergird our democracy and that ensure that the Supreme Court does not just become one more extension of our polarized politics.

If and when it—that happens, our system is not going to work. It's not that the Supreme Court or any of our courts can be hermetically sealed from the rest of our society. These are human beings. They read the newspapers; they've got opinions; they've got values. But our goal is to have them be objective and be able to execute their duties in a way that gives everybody—both the winning party and the losing party in any given case—a sense that they were treated fairly. That depends on a process of selecting and confirming judges that is perceived as fair. And my hope is, is that cooler heads will prevail and people will reflect on what's at stake here once a nomination is made.

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* One of the things that is abundantly clear whenever a President and Prime Minister sit down to engage on important issues of relevance to our peoples is that the relationship, the friendship between our two countries goes far beyond any two individuals or any ideologies.

I have tremendous confidence in the American people, and look forward to working with whomever they choose to send to this White House later this year.

Alex [Alexander Panetta, Canadian Press].

### *Canada-U.S. Relations*

Q. Good morning. This meeting is happening at a unique point in the Canada-U.S. relationship. President Obama, you have very little time left here. Prime Minister Trudeau, you have several years to think about and work on Canada's most important relationship. So I'd like to ask you a longer term question, maybe to lay down some markers about big ideas, big things that you think the two countries could achieve in the coming years, beyond the next few months, and whether those things might include something like a common market that would allow goods and services and workers to flow more freely across our border.

And on a more personal note, you've had a chance to observe each other's election campaigns, and now you've had a chance to work together a little bit. I'd like to ask you for your impressions—to ask about your impression of President Obama and his potential legacy and about Prime Minister Trudeau's potential. And if you could answer that in French, bonus points to either of you—[laughter]—but we'd be especially keen to hear Prime Minister Trudeau do so. Thank you.

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Thank you, Alex. First of all, we very much did engage on big issues throughout our conversations and throughout our hard work this morning and over the months leading up to this meeting today, issues that are of import not just to all of our citizens, but to the entire world.

Whether it's how we ensure that there is no contradiction between a strong economy and a protected environment; understand how we need to work together as individual countries, but indeed, as a planet to address the challenges of climate change; how we continue to seek to ensure security for our citizens here at home, but also create stability and opportunity and health security for people around the world facing pandemics and violence and issues—these are big issues that Canada and the U.S. have always been engaged on in various ways over the past decades and centuries and, indeed, will continue to.

One of the things that we highlight is the fact that we have different scales, different perspectives on similar issues and on shared values is actually a benefit in that we can complement each other in our engagement with the world and our approach to important issues.

So I look forward to many, many, many more years—it will certainly outlive the both of us—of a tremendous and responsible and effective friendship and collaboration between our two countries.

*[Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* The topic of our discussions this morning has been what is at stake: climate change, security in the world, our commitments towards the most vulnerable populations. Canada and the United States are the lucky countries in many ways; they will always have a lot to do in order to be together in the world. And this is what we are going to keep on doing in the years and the decades to come, and we hope in the centuries to come.

About President Obama, I've learned a lot from him. He is somebody who is a deep thinker. He is somebody with a big heart, but also a big brain. And for me to be able to count on him as a friend who has lived through many of the things that I'm about to encounter on the political stage, on the international stage, it's a great comfort to me. And it is always great to have people that you can trust, people that you can count on personally, especially when you are facing very big challenges such as what we are doing right now in the United States and Canada.

*[Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in English as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Always pleased to hear from President Obama how he has engaged with difficult issues of the past, because he is a man of both tremendous heart and tremendous intellect. And being able to draw on his experience and his wisdom as I face the very real challenges that our countries and, indeed, our world will be facing in the coming years is something I appreciate deeply about my friend, Barack.

*President Obama.* Well—Alex, was it?

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Alex.

*President Obama.* Let me just note, first of all, that the tenor of your question seems to imply that I'm old and creaky. *[Laughter]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Not the tenor of my answer, I hope. *[Laughter]*

*President Obama.* No, you managed it well. *[Laughter]* But don't think I didn't catch that. It is true—I think I've said before—that in my congratulatory call, I indicated to him that if, in fact, you plan to keep your dark hair, then you have to start dyeing it early. *[Laughter]* You hit a certain point, and it's too late; you'll be caught.

But look, I think Justin and his delegation—because one of the things we learn very rapidly in these jobs is, is that this is a team effort and not a solo act—they're bringing the right values, enormous energy, enormous passion and commitment to their work, and perhaps most importantly, it's clear that they are keenly interested in engaging Canadian citizens in the process of solving problems.

And I think that's how democracies are supposed to work. And their instincts are sound. And that's reflected in the positive response of—to the work that they've done so far, and I think that will carry them very far. And Justin's talent and concern for the Canadian people and his appreciation of the vital role that Canada can play in the larger world is self-apparent. He is, I think, going to do a great job. And we're looking forward to partnering with him, and we're glad to have him and his team as a partner.

And with respect to big ideas, look, to some degree, you don't fix what's not broken. And the relationship is extraordinary and doesn't, I don't think, need some set of revolutionary concepts. What it does require is not taking the relationship for granted. It does require steady effort. And perhaps most importantly, it requires, because we have so much in common, that we recognize on the big, looming issues on the horizon, it is vital for us to work together because the more aligned we are, the more we can shape the international agenda to meet these challenges.

Climate change is such an example. This is going to be a big problem for everybody. There are countries that are going to be hit worse by it; in some ways, Canada and the United States, as wealthier countries, can probably adapt and manage better. On the other hand, we're also those responsible for a lot of the carbon pollution that is causing climate change. If we don't agree, if we're not aggressive, if we're not farsighted, if we don't pool our resources around the research and development and clean energy agenda that's required to solve this problem, then other countries won't step up, and it won't get solved. That's a big idea. That's a really important effort.

With respect to the economy, one of the things that Canada and the United States share is a commitment to a free market. I believe, and I know Justin does as well, that a market-based economy not only has proven to be the greatest engine for prosperity the world has ever known, but also underwrites our individual freedoms in many ways. And we value our business sector, and we value entrepreneurship. But what we're seeing across the developed world—and this will have manifestations in the developing world—is the need for more inclusion in growth, making sure that it's broad based, making sure that people are not left behind in a globalized economy. And that's an area—that's a big idea for the United States and Canada to work together on, along with our other partners.

If we don't get this right, if we do not make sure that the average Canadian or the average American has confidence that the fruits of their labor, their—the opportunities for their children are going to continue to expand over time, if they see societies in which a very few are doing better and better and the middle class and working people are falling further and further behind, that destabilizes the economy, it makes it less efficient, it makes it less rapid in its growth. But it also starts destabilizing our politics in—and our democracies.

And so working together to find effective ways, not to close off borders, not to pretend that somehow we can shut off trade, not to forget that we are, ourselves, a nation—nations of immigrants and that diversity is our strength, but rather to say, yes, the world is big, and we are going to help shape it, and we're going to value our openness and our diversity, and the fact that we are leaders in a global supply chain, but we're going to do so in ways that make sure

everybody benefits—that's important work that we're going to have to do together. And I know Justin shares that commitment just as I do.

Margaret Brennan [CBS News].

*U.S. Supreme Court Justice Nomination Process/2016 Presidential Election/Republican Party/Trade*

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Some of your critics has—have pointed to the incredibly polarized political climate as—under your administration as contributing to the rise of someone as provocative as Donald Trump. Do you feel responsibility for that, or even some of the protectionist rhetoric from some Democratic candidates? Do you have a timeline for when you might make a Presidential endorsement? And to follow on my colleague's question here, do you feel political heat is constraining your pool of viable Supreme Court nominees? Thank you.

*President Obama.* It's a threefer. I think it's important for me to nominate a Supreme Court nominee quickly because I think it's important for the Supreme Court to have its full complement of Justices. I don't feel constrained in terms of the pool to draw from or that I'm having to take shortcuts in terms of the selection and vetting process.

With respect to your first question, I've actually heard this argument a number of times. I have been blamed by Republicans for a lot of things, but being blamed for their primaries and who they're selecting for their party is novel. *[Laughter]*

Look, I've said—I said it at the State of the Union—that one of my regrets is the degree to which polarization and the nasty tone of our politics has accelerated rather than waned over the course of the last 7½ years. And I do all kinds of soul searching in terms of are there things I can do better to make sure that we're unifying the country. But I also have to say, Margaret, that, objectively, it's fair to say that the Republican political elites and many of the information outlets—social media, news outlets, talk radio, television stations—have been feeding the Republican base for the last 7 years a notion that everything I do is to be opposed; that cooperation or compromise somehow is a betrayal; that maximalist, absolutist positions on issues are politically advantageous; that there is a "them" out there and an "us" and "them" are the folks who are causing whatever problems you're experiencing.

And the tone of that politics, which I certainly have not contributed to—I have not—I don't think that I was the one to prompt questions about my birth certificate, for example. I don't remember saying, hey, why don't you ask me about that? *[Laughter]* Or why don't you question whether I'm American or whether I'm loyal or whether I have America's best interests at heart? Those aren't things that were prompted by any actions of mine.

And so what you're seeing within the Republican Party is, to some degree, all those efforts over a course of time creating an environment where somebody like a Donald Trump can thrive. He's just doing more of what has been done for the last 7½ years.

And in fact, in terms of his positions on a whole range of issues, they're not very different from any of the other candidates. I mean, it's not as if there's a massive difference between Mr. Trump's position on immigration and Mr. Cruz's position on immigration. Mr. Trump might just be more provocative in terms of how he says it, but the actual positions aren't that different. For that matter, they're not that different from Mr. Rubio's positions on immigration, despite the fact that both Mr. Cruz and Mr. Rubio, their own families are the products of immigration and the openness of our society.

So I am more than happy to own the responsibility as President, as the only office holder who was elected by all the American people, to continue to make efforts to bridge divides and help us find common ground. As I've said before, I think that common ground exists all across the country. You see it every day in how people work together and live together and play together and raise their kids together. But what I'm not going to do is to validate some notion that the Republican crackup that's been taking place is a consequence of actions that I'm—I've taken.

And what's interesting—I'll just say one last thing about this—there are thoughtful conservatives who are troubled by this, who are troubled by the direction of their party. I think it is very important for them to reflect on what it is about the politics they've engaged in that allows the circus we've been seeing to transpire and to do some introspection.

Because, ultimately, I want an effective Republican Party. I think this country has to have responsible parties that can govern and that are prepared to lead and govern whether they're in the minority or in the majority, whether they occupy the White House or they do not. And I've often said I want a serious, effective Republican Party, in part to challenge some of the blind spots and dogmas in the Democratic Party. I think that's useful.

You mentioned trade, for example. I believe that there have been bad trade deals on occasion in the past that oftentimes, they have served the interests of global corporations, but not necessarily served the interests of workers. But I'm absolutely persuaded that we cannot put up walls around a global economy and that to sell a bill of goods to the American people and workers that if you just shut down trade somehow, your problems would go away prevents us from actually solving some of these big problems about inequality and the decline of our manufacturing base and so on.

And that's an area where some traditional conservatives and economists have had some important insights. But they can't be presented effectively if it's combined with no interest in helping workers and busting up unions and providing tax breaks to the wealthy rather than providing help to folks who are working hard and trying to pay the bills. And certainly, it's not going to be heard if it's coupled with vehement, anti-immigrant sentiment that betrays our values.

So, okay?

Q. And an endorsement, sir?

*President Obama.* I think that the Democratic voters are doing just fine working this out. I think it's useful that we've had a vigorous debate among two good people who care deeply about our country and who have fought hard on behalf of working people in this country for a long time. I think it's been a good conversation. And my most important role will be to make sure that after primaries is done, I'm bringing everybody together so that we focus on winning the general election.

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Emmanuelle [Emmanuelle Latraverse, Radio-Canada].

*Canada-U.S. Trade Relations/Canada-U.S. Relations/President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)/U.S. Foreign Policy*

Q. Mr. President, I'll be asking the Prime Minister my question in French, but I will repeat for you in English afterwards.

*[The reporter spoke in French, and her remarks were interpreted as follows.]*

Q. Mr. Trudeau, you have not talked about softwood lumber, and it's a major problem for the bilateral relations. Have you thought about solutions to avoid that the conflict reopens in October? And you signed several agreements—trade, environment—but what can you do so that the implementations survive the November election and that all of this has to be restarted a year from now?

*[The reporter spoke in English as follows.]*

Q. ——of softwood lumber, which is looming over the bilateral relation? And has any avenue been explored into avoiding a new conflict in October? And to what extent is the fear of losing seats for the Democrats due to this issue kind of hampering progress on this? And that being said, you and Prime Minister Trudeau have signed a number of agreements on a number of issues. What can be done for this progress not to be lost with the arrival of a new administration and have everything have to be started all over again? Thank you.

*[Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* Thank you, Emmanuelle. For months and months, we have been preparing that meeting. And this morning we worked very hard, and we made a lot of progress, and we have showed what is at stake. A lot is at stake. And we hope that this is going to be solved shortly to help enormously not only Canadian workers and Canadian economy, but also the economy of both our countries.

And among these discussions, we—of course, we raised the question of softwood lumber. We keep on working on that. And I'm totally confident that we are on the right track towards a solution in the next weeks and months to come.

Now, in terms of the decisions that we have taken and the work we have done today, I'm extremely confident that what we have managed to achieve, the agreements that we have taken and the solutions that we have found for the problems that we face together, I'm confident that all this is going to become a reality. Because at every stage, not only are we talking about what is good for one side or the other side, but we're talking about what is good for both countries. Our economies are so interwoven, our populations are so interconnected, that we are going to have agreement, for instance, that will facilitate crossing of borders while increasing security of our citizens. This is good for both sides. And it is where we worked so hard together, with a lot of progress and a lot of success today.

*[Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in English as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Trudeau.* ——on many different issues over the course of an extremely productive meeting this morning, issues that have been worked on intensely by our respective friends, colleagues and delegations over the past weeks and months. And certainly, softwood lumber came up. And I'm confident that we are on a track towards resolving this irritant in the coming weeks and months.

But in general, the issues that we made tremendous progress on I'm extremely confident will move forward in a rapid and appropriate fashion because we found such broad agreement on issues that aren't just good for one of our two countries, but indeed both of our countries: for Canadians and Americans, for their jobs, for our kids and their futures, for workers, businesses, as we tackle challenges on the economy, challenges on the environment, and understand that working together in constructive, productive ways is exactly what this relationship and, indeed, this friendship is all about.

So I'm feeling extremely good about the hard work that was done this morning, and indeed, about the work remaining to do over the coming weeks and months on the issues we brought forward today.

*President Obama.* This issue of softwood lumber will get resolved in some fashion. Our teams are already making progress on it. It's been a longstanding bilateral irritant, but hardly defines the nature of the U.S.-Canadian relationship. And we have some very smart people, and they'll find a way to resolve it, undoubtedly, to the dissatisfaction of all parties concerned, because that's the nature of these kinds of things, right? Each side will want 100 percent, and we'll find a way for each side to get 60 percent or so of what they need, and people will complain and grumble, but it will be fine. [Laughter]

And in terms of continuity—one thing I will say—this is an area where I'll play the elder statesman and as Alex described me. [Laughter] And as somebody who came in after an administration that, politically, obviously saw things very differently than I did, what you discover is that for all the differences you may have in your political parties, when you're actually in charge, then you have to be practical, and you do what is needed to be done and what's in front of you. And one of the things that is important for the United States or for Canada or for any leading power in the world, is to live up to its commitments and to provide continuing momentum on efforts, even if they didn't start under your administration.

So there were a whole host of initiatives that began under the Bush administration—some that I was very enthusiastic about, like PEPFAR, that has saved millions of lives and prevented HIV/AIDS or provided vital drugs to those already infected with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the world, something that President Bush deserves enormous credit for. We continued that.

But there are also some areas where, when I was outside the Government, I questioned how they were approaching it. I might have tweaked it. To the extent that it involved foreign policy, I might say to my foreign policy partners, look, we have a problem of doing it this way, but here is a suggestion for how we can do the same thing or meet your interests in a slightly different way.

But you're always concerned about making sure that the credibility of the United States is sustained, or the credibility of Canada is sustained, which is why when there's turnover in governments, the work that's been done continues. And particularly when you have a close friendship and relationship with a partner like Canada, it's not as if the work we're doing on the Arctic or on entry and exit visas vanishes when the next President comes in. Of course, I intend to make sure that the next President who comes in agrees with me on everything. [Laughter] But just in case that doesn't happen, the U.S.-Canadian relationship will be fine.

All right? Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau, wife of Prime Minister Trudeau; and Donald J. Trump, chairman and chief executive officer, Trump Organization, Sens. R. Edward "Ted" Cruz and Marco A. Rubio in their capacity as Republican Presidential candidates; and former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Sen. Bernard Sanders, in their capacity as 2016 Democratic Presidential candidates. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Joint news conferences :: Canada, Prime Minister Trudeau.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bush, George W.; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Cruz, R. Edward "Ted"; Grégoire-Trudeau, Sophie; Obama, Michelle; Rubio, Marco A.; Sanders, Bernard; Trudeau, Justin P.J.; Trump, Donald J.

*Subjects:* Africa : Energy infrastructure, improvement efforts ; Canada : Prime Minister; Canada : Relations with U.S.; Canada : Security cooperation with U.S.; Canada : Trade with U.S.; Colombia : U.S. assistance; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Communications : News media, Presidential interviews; Congress : Senate :: Presidential nominations, confirmation process; Cuba : Relations with U.S.; Diseases : Zika virus in Western Hemisphere, containment and prevention efforts; Elections : 2016 Presidential and congressional elections; Energy : Greenhouse gas emissions, regulation; Environment : Climate change; Environment : Paris Agreement; Foreign policy, U.S. : Antipersonnel landmines, elimination efforts; Foreign policy, U.S. : Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) ; HIV/AIDS : Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, President's; Judiciary : Supreme Court :: Associate Justice; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Syria : Civil war and sectarian conflict; Syria : Refugees, humanitarian situation; Terrorism : Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization; Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

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