

Administration of Barack Obama, 2016

Statement on the Observance of Ramadan

June 5, 2016

As another new moon heralds the start of the holy month of Ramadan, Michelle and I extend our best wishes to Muslims across the United States and around the world. For many, this month is an opportunity to focus on reflection and spiritual growth, forgiveness, patience and resilience, compassion for those less fortunate, and unity across communities. Each lesson is profound on its own and, taken together, forms a harmonious whole. It's also a time of year that brings some of the best dishes to the table across the world as families and neighbors gather for iftar.

Here in the United States, we are blessed with Muslim communities as diverse as our Nation itself. There are those whose heritage can be traced back to the very beginning of our Nation, as well as those who have only just arrived. Doctors, lawyers, artists, teachers, scientists, community organizers, public servants, and military members, each night will all break their fasts together in cities across America.

As Muslim Americans celebrate the holy month, I am reminded that we are one American family. I stand firmly with Muslim American communities in rejection of the voices that seek to divide us or limit our religious freedoms or civil rights. I stand committed to safeguarding the civil rights of all Americans, no matter their religion or appearance. I stand in celebration of our common humanity and dedication to peace and justice for all.

And in this month of reflection, we cannot forget the millions of lives that have been displaced by conflict and struggle, across the world, and in our own backyards. Far too many Muslims may not be able to observe Ramadan from the comfort of their own homes this year or afford to celebrate Eid with their children. We must continue working together to alleviate the suffering of these individuals. This sacred time reminds us of our common obligations to uphold the dignity of every human being. We will continue to welcome immigrants and refugees into our Nation, including those who are Muslim.

As I have done throughout my Presidency, I look forward to opening the doors of the White House to Muslim Americans during this special occasion, this year for an Eid celebration marking the end of Ramadan. I can think of no better way to mark my administration's last celebration of Ramadan as President than to honor the contributions of Muslims in America and across the world for Eid. *Ramadan Kareem.*

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