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Remarks on Signing a Memorandum on National Space Traffic Management Policy

June 18, 2018

The President. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you very much. This is an incredible time for our country. I would say that our economy—and many of you know that very well—is doing better than it ever has done.

Our employment numbers are the best that they've been, perhaps ever, but certainly in recorded history—reports just came out—best in 44 years. Black unemployment is the lowest level in history. Hispanic unemployment, lowest level in history. Women unemployment, lowest level in 21 years. It started at 19, went up to 20; now it's up to 21. Very soon it's going to be in history.

We're doing numbers like we've never seen, and we have some of the great industry leaders here today who I'm going to be introducing in a little while, quickly. And they're going to do so much with NASA and so many of the great things we're doing. But they understand full well what's happening. We've never seen a period of time like this. The whole world is looking up to the United States, and the United States is respected again. There was a period of time we were not so respected, not so long ago. The United States is respected again.

Immigration Reform Legislation

If I might, I just wanted to make a brief statement on immigration and what's happening. And I'll say it very honestly, and I'll say it very straight: Immigration is the fault—and all of the problems that we're having—because we cannot get them to sign legislation; we cannot get them even to the negotiating table. And I say it's, very strongly, the Democrats' fault. They're obstruction—they're really obstructionists. And they are obstructing.

The United States will not be a migrant camp, and it will not be a refugee holding facility. It won't be. You look at what's happening in Europe, you look at what's happening in other places, we can't allow that to happen to the United States, not on my watch.

For the rest of the world, you look at everything that's taking place—pick up your newspapers this morning, and you see—we want safety, and we want security for our country. If the Democrats would sit down instead of obstructing, we could have something done very quickly—good for the children, good for country, good for the world. It could take place quickly.

We could have an immigration bill. We could have—child separation, we're stuck with these horrible laws. They're horrible laws. What's happening is so sad, is so sad. And it can be taken care of quickly, beautifully, and we'll have safety.

This could really be something very special. It could be something maybe even for the world to watch, just like they're watching our great economy, how it's soaring. They could watch this. We have the worst immigration laws in the entire world. Nobody has such sad, such bad, and actually, in many cases, such horrible and tough. You see about child separation; you see what's going on there.

But just remember, a country without borders is not a country at all. We need borders. We need security. We need safety. We have to take care of our people. You take a look at the

death and destruction that's been caused by people coming into this country, without going through a process. We want a merit-based immigration system so that Boeing and Lockheed and all of the people—Grumman—all of the people that are here today, the heads of every company, so that you can hire people on a merit-based—you know they're coming in—they're people that came on merit, not based on a lottery or not people that snuck across the border. And they could be murderers and thieves and so much else.

So we want a safe country, and it starts with the borders. And that's the way it is.

Now I'd like to—[*applause*]. Thank you. Thank you.

And again, we can do this very quickly if the Democrats come to the table. Everybody wants to do it. We want to do it more than they do. If they come to the table, instead of playing politics, we can do it very, very quickly.

National Space Council

So welcome to the third meeting of the National Space Council. I want to begin by recognizing our great Vice President, Mike Pence, who's been so involved. And, Mike, I want to thank you for the incredible commitment to American leadership in space.

I also want to thank Secretary Wilbur Ross, Secretary Elaine Chao, Director Mulvaney, Director Coats, Administrator Bridenstine—and congratulations, wherever you are. Where is he? Where is he?

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Administrator James F. Bridenstine. Right here, sir.

The President. Congratulations. You'd better do a good job. [*Laughter*] Or I'll say "You're fired!" in 2 minutes. You have a lot of support, and you've loved this right from the beginning.

Administrator Bridenstine. Yes, sir.

The President. He was in Congress. He did an awfully good job, but this was his love. Right?

Administrator Bridenstine. Yes, sir.

The President. So good luck. Secretary Wilson, General Dunford, Under Secretary Thompson, Deputy Secretary Shanahan, and Acting Deputy Secretary Grady for being here today.

We're honored to be joined by Congressmen Robert Aderholt, Brian Babin, and Dana Rohrabacher. Stand up, Congressmen. Please. Please. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Dana. And a special welcome to a strong, powerful, wonderful woman. Does a great job as Governor of one of my favorite places in the world, Alabama—Kay Ivey. Kay. Am I doing okay in Alabama?

Governor Kay Ivey of Alabama. Yes, sir.

The President. I'd better do okay in Alabama. [*Laughter*] We love Alabama.

I also want to recognize three true American heroes. The first woman to command a Space Shuttle, the great Eileen Collins. Stand up, Eileen. Great job. Great job. That's a lot of time in space. Along with legendary *Apollo* astronauts Jack Schmitt and Buzz Aldrin. Buzz has been a friend of mine for a long time. Jack, thank you very much. Thank you. Great.

And I also have a list of some of the CEOs and chairmen and presidents of these incredible companies. Wes Bush, CEO of Northrup Grumman. Where's Wes? Wes, thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Wes. Gwynne Shotwell. Gwynne? Stand up, Gwynne. She'll end up running for office soon. See? Bob Smith, CEO of Blue Origin, who's very active. Thank you, Bob. I hear you're doing a great job. President and CEO, United Launch Alliance. That's a combination of Boeing and Lockheed on the Space Launch System, SLS.

I don't like when Boeing and Lockheed get together because the pricing only goes up, but that's okay in this case. [*Laughter*] I don't know. I don't love that stuff. We're going to have to talk about that, your joining those two companies. Oh. [*Laughter*] Oh, boy. Look at Dennis. Dennis is so happy. I don't like that stuff, Mike. [*Laughter*]

Vice President Michael R. Pence. That's right.

The President. Marillyn Hewson, who has done a fantastic job at Lockheed Martin. Marillyn? Marillyn. You have done. What do you think of that merger for the space launch—what do you think? Look at them; they're sitting together. Oh. Boeing. [*Laughter*] Oh, it's no wonder we don't get the pricing we want. Huh? [*Laughter*]

Dennis Muilenburg, friend of mine. A great guy. The head of Boeing. And, boy, have you done a good job on all fronts—commercial, military. Both of you. What a job you've both done. Thank you. Stay apart. Stay apart. Don't get together. Stay apart.

And you know, just a great group of other executives are here from the top companies. And it's patriots like you that are the reason why America was first in flight, first to the Moon, and why America will always be first in space. You know, before I got here, it wasn't looking so good. Before we came in, I will tell you, they didn't have such big plans for space. Now they have plans.

And it's great, not only in terms of jobs and everything else; it's great for the psyche of our country. This morning it came out that small business is the most optimistic it's ever been in the history of our country. That's pretty good. Now, I don't know if they go back to 1776. I don't know if they go back to, you know, areas of a little bit earlier, slightly, like by 100 years or 200 years. But I will tell you, I have never seen optimism like we have right now. So it's a very exciting time.

I want to also say that when it comes to space, too often, for too many years, our dreams of exploration and discovery were really squandered by politics and bureaucracy, and we knocked that out. So important for our psyche, what's you're doing. It's going to be important monetarily and militarily. But so important for right up here, the psyche. We don't want China and Russia and other countries leading us. We've always led; we've gone way far afield for decades now, having to do with our subject today. We're going to be the leader by far. We're behind you a thousand percent.

America's vital interest in space lost out to special interests in Washington, except, of course, for the Senators and Congressmen here. They would never do it. Right, Dana? But all of that is changing. We know that. My administration is reclaiming America's heritage as the world's greatest space-faring nation. The essence of the American character is to explore new horizons and to tame new frontiers. But our destiny, beyond the Earth, is not only a matter of national identity, but a matter of national security. So important for our military. So important. And people don't talk about it.

When it comes to defending America, it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space. We must have American dominance in space. So important.

Very importantly, I'm hereby directing the Department of Defense and Pentagon to immediately begin the process necessary to establish a space force as the sixth branch of the Armed Forces. That's a big statement. We are going to have the Air Force, and we are going to have the space force, separate but equal. It is going to be something. So important. General Dunford, if you would carry that assignment out, I would be very greatly honored, also. Where's General Dunford?

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC. Right here.

The President. General? Got it?

Chairman Dunford. We've got it.

The President. Let's go get it, General. But that's the importance that we give it. We're going to have the space force.

One year ago, I revived the National Space Council and put exactly the right man in charge, and that's our friend, Mike Pence. He feels very strongly about this. And in December, I signed a historic directive that will return Americans to the Moon for the first time since 1972, if you can believe that. Always remembering it's about that, but it's also about jobs and the economy. This is a great thing we're doing.

This time, we will do more than plant our flag and leave our footprints. We will establish a long-term presence, expand our economy, and build the foundation for the eventual mission to Mars, which is actually going to happen very quickly. And you know, I've always said that rich guys seem to like rockets. So all of those rich guys that are dying for our real estate to launch their rockets, we won't charge you too much. Just go ahead. If you beat us to Mars, we'll be very happy, and you'll be even more famous. But they do like—explain that. Where's Eric? They do like rockets, for some reason, huh? They like those rockets.

But you know what? If—as long as he's—as long as it's an American rich person, that's good. Okay? [*Laughter*] They can beat us. We'll save a little money, and they can beat us, and we're taking full credit for it. Don't worry about it. [*Laughter*]

But we'll be setting aggressive timelines, challenging old ways of doing business, and we will be expecting real results. And we are making our incredible facilities—okay?—available to these people that have been doing so incredibly by themselves on rocketry. So you're invited. The rent won't be high.

I am instructing my administration to embrace the budding commercial space industry. We are modernizing out-of-date space regulations. They're way out of date. They haven't been changed in many, many years. And today we're taking one more step to unleash the power of American ingenuity. In a few moments, I will sign a new directive to Federal departments and agencies. They will work together with American industry to implement a state-of-the-art framework for space traffic management. But don't let it get too out of control, please. [*Laughter*] We know about what's going on with a lot of other rules and regulations.

By the way, we've set the all-time record in history of this country in cutting regulation. So when I hear about that, I get a little bit—a little bit tenuous. Be careful. Don't get too carried away.

But we have. We've cut more regulations than any administration, whether it's 4 years, 8 years, or 16 years, in one case. We've cut more regulations than any other President in history. And I actually think that, along with the massive tax cuts, I think that the regulation cutting may have even had more of an impact on the economy. It's been incredible.

We have regulation. We have a lot of regulation. We have good regulation. But you don't need 20 years to get rejected from building a highway. We can reject you in 2 years or 1 year. We have it down from 17 years, down to 2. We expect to get it down to 1. And if it's not good, we're going to reject. But it's going to be a fast rejection. You're not going to go an entire lifetime only to find it's not going to be built.

Two previous administrations tried and failed to develop a system to deal with congested conditions in orbit. We are finally going to get it done. It's going to happen fast. One year from now, our Nation will mark an important milestone in human history: half a century since Americans first stepped off the *Eagle* and onto the Moon. That was a big—that was a big day. Right?

In that magnificent moment, the American astronaut embodied the incredible spirit of America: the confidence of a cowboy, the skill of a fighter pilot, the ambition of a scientist, and the courage of a true, true, brilliant, tough warrior. They bounded fearlessly into the unknown to be there first. They did the impossible because they knew that, together, there is absolutely nothing Americans can't do. When we get together, there's nobody even close.

Now we are ready to begin the next great chapter of American space exploration. This is a very important day. This is a very important gathering. A new generation of young people seeks to challenge—really challenge hard—to get their talent and their skill to work. And now we're giving them a forum and a platform from which they can put that genius to work.

Legions of welders and metalworkers, scientists and engineers stand ready to build a powerful new rocket and gleaming new spaceships. And that goes with all of the other things that we're building in our country. Our Nation of pioneers still yearns to conquer the unknown, because we are Americans, and the future belongs totally to us. Once more, we will launch intrepid souls blazing through the sky and soaring into the heavens. Once more, we will summon the American spirit to tame the next great American frontier. And once more, we will proudly lead humanity—and that's what it is, it's humanity—beyond the Earth and into those forbidden skies, but they will not be forbidden for long.

You're very important people. You have a great, great contribution. What you're doing has been incredible, but it will be even more incredible—far more incredible—because we are giving you a platform, the likes of which nobody has ever been given before. I am a big believer. You will go out there, and you will take that frontier, which is largely unknown by man or woman, and you will learn everything there is to know about it. And what you're doing is so important—remember—economically, militarily, scientifically. In every way, there is no place like space.

Good luck, General Dunford and the Joint Chiefs. I want to wish you a lot of luck with space force. But that shows how important it is. Congratulations on your tremendous success, but you're going to have far more success right now.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Mike.

Okay, everybody. Here's a big one. Right? Would anybody like me not to sign this? [*Laughter*] Is there anybody in this room? They would be in big trouble, I think. [*Laughter*]

[At this point, the President signed the memorandum, Space Policy Directive–3.]

Thank you. Where is Bridenstine? Right, come here. You've got it. Was that okay, Mike? Thank you. Thank you, everybody. I have a few pens. Pass them around. Okay. Thank you very much, everybody. Congratulations. Great day. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs Andrea L. Thompson; Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Claire M. Grady; Gwynne Shotwell, president and chief operating officer, Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX); Salvatore T. "Tory" Bruno, president and chief executive officer, United Launch Alliance; Boeing Dennis A. Muilenburg, chairman of the board, president, and chief executive officer, Boeing Co.; Marillyn A. Hewson, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Lockheed Martin Corp.; and Eric Stallmer, president, Commercial Spaceflight Federation.

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Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Aderhold, Robert B.; Aldrin, Edwin E. "Buzz"; Babin, Brian; Bridenstine, James F; Bridenstine, James F.; Bruno, Salvatore T. "Tory"; Bush, Wesley G.; Chao, Elaine L.; Coats, Daniel R.; Collins, Eileen M.; Dunford, Joseph F.; Dunford, Joseph F., Jr.; Grady, Claire M.; Hewson, Marillyn A.; Ivey, Kay E.; Muilenburg, Dennis A.; Mulvaney, John M. "Mick"; Pence, Michael R.; Rohrabacher, Dana T.; Ross, Wilbur L., Jr.; Schmitt, Harrison H. "Jack"; Shanahan, Patrick M.; Shotwell, Gwynne; Smith, Robert; Stallmer, Eric; Thompson, Andrea L.; Wilson, Heather A.

Subjects: Air Force, Department of the : Secretary; Alabama : Governor; Armed Forces, U.S. : Space presence and activities, strengthening efforts; Budget and Management, Office of : Director; Business and industry : Small businesses, promotion efforts; Commerce, Department of : Secretary; Congress : Bipartisanship; Defense and national security : Border security; Defense, Department of : Deputy Secretary; Defense, Department of : Joint Chiefs of Staff; Economy, national : Improvement; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Government organization and employees : Federal infrastructure review and permitting, modernization efforts; Government organization and employees : Federal regulations, review; Homeland Security, Department of : Acting Deputy Secretary; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Immigration and naturalization : Reform; Immigration and naturalization : Refugees; National Intelligence : Director; Science and technology : Global competitiveness; Science and technology : Public-private partnerships; Space Council, National; Space program : Aeronautics and Space Administration, National; Space program : Expansion; Space program : Space traffic management, strengthening efforts; State, Department of : Arms Control and International Security, Under Secretary for; Taxation : Tax relief; Transportation, Department of : Secretary; White House Office : Vice President.

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