

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023*

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Belvidere, Illinois  
November 9, 2023**

*U.S. Airstrikes in Eastern Syria*

*Q.* Mr. President, why did you strike the Revolutionary Guard? Mr. President, why did you strike Iran's Revolutionary Guard?

*The President.* Because they struck us.

*Q.* And, President Biden, why did——

*Q.* Do you plan to hit them again?

*The President.* If they strike us.

*2024 Presidential Election/Public Opinion Polls*

*Q.* Why do you think it is, in this election season——

*The President.* Why do you think it is I always take your question? [*Laughter*]

*Q.* It's a good one. I've got two good ones. Why do you think it is that people should be more concerned about abortion access than your age?

*The President.* I don't think it's comparable comparison.

*Q.* Why do you think it is that you're trailing Trump in all these swing State polls?

*The President.* Because you don't read the polls—[*inaudible*]. There's 10 polls. Eight of them, I'm beating him in those States. Eight of them. You guys only do two. CNN and New York Times. Check it out. Check it out. We'll get you a copy of all those other polls.

*2024 Presidential Election*

*Q.* You don't believe you're trailing in battleground States?

*The President.* No, I don't.

[*At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.*]

*Q.* Mr. President, do you have any red lines——

*Gaza Conflict/Israeli Military Operations*

*Q.* [*Inaudible*]—Gaza cease-fire, Mr. President?

*The President.* Pardon me?

*Q.* What are the chances of a Gaza cease-fire?

*The President.* None. No possibility.

*Hostages Held by Hamas in Gaza*

*Q.* Any update on getting hostages out?

*The President.* We're still optimistic.

*U.S. Efforts To Secure the Release of Hostages in Gaza*

*Q.* What's the delay on getting more hostages?

*Q.* What's your message to the families of the hostages in Gaza?

*The President.* We're not going to stop until we get them out.

*Q.* How confident are you that you will get them out?

*Q.* What's been the delay?

#### *U.S. Airstrikes in Eastern Syria*

*Q.* Mr. President, are the retaliatory strikes working? Mr. President, are the retaliatory strikes working in the Middle East?

*The President.* Yes. I mean, they're working in the sense that we're hitting the targets they're seeking.

#### *Angola*

*Q.* Mr. President, Angola will celebrate the Day of Independence this Saturday. We are celebrating 48 years of independence. And you have been talking about Angola a lot. Would you like to send a message to the Angolan people?

*The President.* Yes. They should be very proud. Very, very proud. And you're going to build out in Angola. It's going to be—become one of the leaders in African—in the economy. We've got to get the economy more up to speed.

*Q.* And when are you meeting President Lourenço, because you have been talking about Angola, you want to help Angola, but you didn't have a chance to meet President Lourenço yet. When are you meeting him?

*The President.* I don't know the time, but I'm sure I'll meet him. Thank you.

*Q.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Lourenço, Joao Manuel Goncalves.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Angola, economic growth and development; Angola, President; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Israel, military operations in Gaza; News media, Presidential interviews; Syria, U.S. airstrikes.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202300990.