

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Robert Golob of Slovenia**  
*October 22, 2024*

*President Biden.* Well, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to the White House. We were just talking very briefly that I spent a little time in Slovenia early on, and it's a beautiful, beautiful country.

Twenty years ago, when I was a United States Senator, I pushed very hard for your country's admission to NATO, as you know, because I knew then what I know now: We're stronger and a safer world when we stand together with good partners like you.

We've seen it in support for the brave people of Ukraine as they defend themselves against Russia's brutal aggression. And we see it in our work to support democracy and prosperity across the Western Balkans. And we see it—and we saw it earlier this past summer when we secured the release of 16 people, including 4 Americans, unjustly held in Russia. And I want to thank you. It was a feat of diplomacy. I want to thank your country for your support and your leadership and partnership that made it possible. And that's not hyperbole. You made it possible. Thank you.

We made it clear to anyone who questions whether our allies matter—well, they just look at what you did. And they—you matter a great deal.

And so, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. And we look forward to our discussion today.

The floor is yours.

*Prime Minister Golob.* Mr. President, dear Joe, just couple of words, and that is that, with a little help of true friends, nothing is impossible. And I think that's really what our joint effort with the prisoner swap demonstrated to all of the world. And let's continue to work in a true friendship and with a lot of trust.

*President Biden.* Well, there's a lot we agree on. So, welcome. Good to have you here.

*Prime Minister Golob.* Glad to be here.

*President Biden.* And we've got to get our—get moving.

Thank you all.

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

*Q.* What would you like to see Secretary Blinken accomplish on his trip, sir?

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Paul N. Whelan, a U.S. citizen who was arrested and held on espionage charges by Russian security services in Moscow, Russia, on December 28, 2018; Evan Gershkovich, a Wall Street Journal reporter who was arrested by Russian authorities on March 29, 2023; Alsu Kurmasheva, a journalist with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tatar-Bashkir Service who was detained in Kazan, Russia, on October 18, 2023; and U.S. permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza, a British-Russian journalist and contributor to the Washington Post who was arrested by Russian authorities in April 2022 on charges of spreading false information about the armed forces.

*Categories:* Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Slovenia, Prime Minister Golob.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Gershkovich, Evan; Golob, Robert; Kara-Murza, Vladimir; Kurmasheva, Alsu; Whelan, Paul N.

*Subjects:* North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, multilateral prisoner exchange; Slovenia, Prime Minister; Slovenia, relations with U.S.; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Western Balkans, democracy efforts.

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