

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:12 p.m. in the Prague Congress Center. Audio was not avail-

able for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic in Prague *April 5, 2009*

*President Obama.* I just want to say very briefly before this brief visit that I was a fan of Mr. Havel's writings even before he ended up leading, or helping to lead the liberation of this extraordinary country. And so for me to be able to spend some time with him and draw inspiration from him is something that I very much appreciate, and it's a great way to cap off my visit not just to the Czech Republic, but also my visit to Europe.

*Former President Havel.* I'm grateful to the President that he found time in his busy schedule to receive me. And I'm his big admirer, and I'm really glad that we could meet.

*President Obama.* Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:47 p.m. at the Prague Congress Center. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement on the Situation in North Korea *April 5, 2009*

North Korea's development and proliferation of ballistic missile technology pose a threat to the Northeast Asian region and to international peace and security. The launch today of a Taepodong-2 missile was a clear violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718, which expressly prohibits North Korea from conducting ballistic missile-related activities of any kind. With this provocative act, North Korea has ignored its international obligations, rejected unequivocal calls for restraint, and further isolated itself from the community of nations.

We will immediately consult with our allies in the region, including Japan and the Republic of Korea and members of the U.N. Security Council, to bring this matter before the Council. I urge North Korea to abide fully by the res-

olutions of the U.N. Security Council and to refrain from further provocative actions.

Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is a high priority for my administration. The United States is fully committed to maintaining security and stability in Northeast Asia, and we will continue working for the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through the six-party talks. The six-party talks provide the forum for achieving denuclearization, reducing tensions, and for resolving other issues of concern between North Korea, its four neighbors, and the United States. North Korea has a pathway to acceptance in the international community, but it will not find that acceptance unless it abandons its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and abides by its international obligations and commitments.

## Joint Statement by the United States and the European Council on the North Korean Launch *April 5, 2009*

The launch of a missile by North Korea defies UN Security Council resolutions and harms peace and stability in northeast Asia. We call on

North Korea to honor its commitment to abandon all nuclear weapons programs, to abide by recognized norms of international relations, and

to work to promote peace and stability in northeast Asia. North Korea's development of a ballistic missile capability, regardless of the stated purpose of this launch, is aimed at providing it with the ability to threaten countries near and far with weapons of mass destruction. This action demands a response from the international community, including from the UN Security Council to demonstrate that its resolutions cannot be defied with impunity.

The United States and the European Union stand ready to work with others in welcoming into the international community a North Korea that abandons its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and policy of threats aimed at

its neighbors and that protects the rights of its people. Such a North Korea could share in the prosperity and development that the remainder of northeast Asia has achieved in recent years. North Korea, however, cannot realize either international acceptance or economic development linked to the international system until it ceases its threatening behavior and works with the other parties to implement the September 19, 2005 Six-Party Joint Statement.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

## The President's News Conference With President Abdullah Gul of Turkey in Ankara, Turkey

April 6, 2009

*President Gul.* We are very pleased to host the President of the United States, Mr. Barack Obama, in Turkey. It would not be wrong to say that our discussions began in Strasbourg, and the discussions that we began in Strasbourg, we continued with them today, both during our meeting and then over lunch, and it was very beneficial.

At the outset of my remarks, I would like to say that we heard that there's been an earthquake in Italy. We just heard. And I would like to express my condolences to the people who lost their lives. We share the sorrow of the Italian people.

We are very appreciative of the fact that Mr. Obama, having been elected President, made Turkey one of his stops in his first overseas visit, and we have been very happy with that; the Turkish people have been very happy with that.

We have had opportunity to review the strategic dimension of our relations. Most of our relations seem to be on a military and political dimension, but we are also determined to move forward on the economic dimension of our relations. On the area of technology, we'll continue to support development of economic and technology cooperation. These are areas which we place importance on.

In—we look at Turkish-American issues, we see that the United States is very much interested, and must be interested, in important issues around the world as a superpower. And Turkey is an important country in her region, and Turkey is very much interested in many subjects. So if we were to make two separate lists of the issues that our countries are interested in, we would see that they are very much alike. And so I'm very pleased to say that Turkey and the United States have great understanding for each other and they work in cooperation with each other.

Of course, fighting against terrorism is one of the most important issues for both of the countries, and the cooperation that we've had so far will be further developed. And in many geographies, from Afghanistan to the Caucasus to the Balkans to the Middle East, we are working together, and we are determined to continue to work together. And the President has also shown great interest to Turkey's relations with the European Union. We appreciate that very much. We thank him very much for his words in that regard.

I think that this visit has been very beneficial. I'd like to welcome the President once again and wish him success.

Please.