

These are some of the ways we can, must, and will honor the service of our troops and the sacrifices of their families. But we must also do our part, not only as a nation, but as individuals, for those Americans who are bearing the burden of wars being fought on our behalf. That can mean sending a letter or a care package to our troops overseas. It can mean volunteering at a clinic where a wounded warrior is being treated or bringing supplies to a homeless veterans' center. Or it can mean something as simple as saying thank you to a veteran you pass on the street.

That's what Memorial Day is all about. It's about doing all we can to repay the debt we owe to those men and women who have answered our Nation's call by fighting under its flag. It's about recognizing that we, as a people, did not get here by accident or good fortune alone. It's about remembering the hard winter of 1776, when our fragile American experiment seemed doomed to fail, and the early battles of 1861, when a union victory was anything but certain, and the summer of 1944, when the fate of a

world rested on a perilous landing unlike any ever attempted.

It's about remembering each and every one of those moments when our survival as a nation came down not simply to the wisdom of our leaders or the resilience of our people, but to the courage and valor of our fighting men and women. For it's only by remembering these moments that we can truly appreciate a simple lesson of American life: That what makes all we are and all we aspire to be possible are the sacrifices of an unbroken line of Americans that stretches back to our Nation's founding.

That's the meaning of this holiday. That's a truth at the heart of our history. And that is a lesson I hope all Americans will carry with them this Memorial Day weekend and beyond.

Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:15 p.m. on May 22 in the Green Room at the White House for broadcast on May 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 22 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 23.

## **Statement on the Death of Former President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea** *May 23, 2009*

I was saddened by the news of the death of former President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea. During his tenure, President Roh contributed to the strong and vital relationship

between the United States and the Republic of Korea. On behalf of Government of the United States, I offer my condolences to his family and to the Korean people.

## **Remarks on the Situation in North Korea** *May 25, 2009*

Good morning, everybody. We are on our way to Arlington to remember the fallen and those who have served America with extraordinary valor. But before I go there, I wanted to say a few words about North Korea's announcement that it has conducted a nuclear test, as well as its decision to attempt a short-range missile launch.

North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs pose a great threat to the peace and security of the world, and I strongly condemn their reckless action. North Korea's actions en-

danger the people of Northeast Asia, they are a blatant violation of international law, and they contradict North Korea's own prior commitments.

Now, the United States and the international community must take action in response. The record is clear. North Korea has previously committed to abandoning its nuclear program. Instead of following through on that commitment, it has chosen to ignore that commitment. Its actions have also flown in the face of United Nations resolutions. As a result, North Korea is

*May 25 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2009*

not only deepening its own isolation, it's also inviting stronger international pressure. That's evident overnight, as Russia and China as well as our traditional allies of South Korea and Japan have all come to the same conclusion: North Korea will not find security and respect through threats and illegal weapons.

And we will work with our friends and allies to stand up to this behavior, and we will redouble our efforts toward a more robust interna-

tional nonproliferation regime that all countries have responsibilities to meet. In this effort, the United States will never waiver from our determination to protect our people and the peace and security of the world.

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:39 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

## Statement on the Situation in North Korea *May 25, 2009*

Today North Korea said that it has conducted a nuclear test in violation of international law. It appears to also have attempted a short-range missile launch. These actions, while not a surprise given its statements and actions to date, are a matter of grave concern to all nations. North Korea's attempts to develop nuclear weapons, as well as its ballistic missile program, constitute a threat to international peace and security.

By acting in blatant defiance of the United Nations Security Council, North Korea is directly and recklessly challenging the interna-

tional community. North Korea's behavior increases tensions and undermines stability in Northeast Asia. Such provocations will only serve to deepen North Korea's isolation. It will not find international acceptance unless it abandons its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The danger posed by North Korea's threatening activities warrants action by the international community. We have been and will continue working with our allies and partners in the six-party talks as well as other members of the U.N. Security Council in the days ahead.

## Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia *May 25, 2009*

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you. Thank you, Admiral Mullen, for that generous introduction and for your sterling service to our country. To members of our Armed Forces, to our veterans, to honored guests, and families of the fallen: I am deeply honored to be with you on Memorial Day.

Thank you to the superintendent, John Metzler, Jr., who cares for these grounds just as his father did before him. To the 3d Infantry Regiment who, regardless of weather or hour, guard the sanctity of this hallowed ground with the reverence it deserves, we are grateful to you. To servicemembers from every branch of the military who, each Memorial Day, place an American flag before every single stone in this cemetery, we thank you as

well. We are indebted to all who tend to this sacred place.

Here lie Presidents and privates, Supreme Court Justices and slaves, generals familiar to history and unknown soldiers known only to God.

A few moments ago, I laid a wreath at their tomb to pay tribute to all who have given their lives for this country. As a nation, we have gathered here to repeat this ritual in moments of peace, when we pay our respects to the fallen and give thanks for their sacrifice. And we've gathered here in moments of war, when the somber notes of "Taps" echo through the trees and fresh grief lingers in the air.

Today is one of those moments where we pay tribute to those who forged our history, but hold closely the memory of those so