

May 29 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2009

take seriously their responsibilities as citizens so that the entire country is ready.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. in the National Response Coordination Center at

FEMA Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano; and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John O. Brennan.

Statement on Beginning Negotiations on the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty *May 29, 2009*

There is no greater security challenge in the world today than turning the tide on nuclear proliferation, and pursuing the goal of a nuclear-free world. I welcome today's important agreement at the Conference on Disarmament to begin negotiations on a fissile material cutoff treaty, which will end production of fissile materials for use in atomic bombs. As I announced in Prague, a verified cutoff treaty is an essential element of my vision for a world free of nuclear weapons. The treaty will help to cap nuclear arsenals, strengthen the consen-

sus underlying the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and deny terrorists access to nuclear materials.

Today's decision ends more than a decade of inactivity in the Conference on Disarmament and signals a commitment to work together on this fundamental global challenge. It is good to see the Conference at work again. I am committed to consult and cooperate with the governments represented at the Conference on Disarmament to complete this treaty as soon as possible.

The President's Weekly Address *May 30, 2009*

This week, I nominated Judge Sonia Sotomayor of the U.S. Court of Appeals to replace Justice David Souter, who is retiring after nearly two decades on the Supreme Court. After reviewing many terrific candidates, I am certain that she is the right choice. In fact, there has not been a nominee in several generations who has brought the depth of judicial experience to this job that she offers.

Judge Sotomayor's career began when she served as an assistant district attorney in New York, prosecuting violent crimes in America's largest city. After leaving the DA's office, she became a litigator, representing clients in complex international legal disputes. She was appointed to the U.S. District Court, serving 6 years as a trial judge where she presided over hundreds of cases. And most recently, she has spent 11 years on the U.S. Court of Appeals, our Nation's second highest court, grappling with some of the most difficult constitutional and legal issues we face as a nation. She has more experience on the Federal bench than

any incoming Supreme Court Justice in the past 100 years. Quite simply, Judge Sotomayor has a deep familiarity with our judicial system from almost every angle.

And her achievements are all the more impressive when you consider what she had to overcome in order to achieve them. Judge Sotomayor grew up in a housing project in the South Bronx. Her parents came to New York from Puerto Rico during the Second World War. Her father was a factory worker with a third grade education. And when she was just 9 years old, he passed away. Her mother worked 6 days a week as a nurse to provide for her and her brother, buying the only set of encyclopedias in the neighborhood and sending her children to Catholic school. That's what made it possible for Judge Sotomayor to attend two of America's leading universities, graduating at the top of her class at Princeton University, and studying at Yale Law School, where she won a prestigious post as an editor of the school's law journal.