

that this has to be a point in time in which we begin to write a new chapter based on improved governance, a much more serious effort to eradicate corruption, joint efforts to accelerate the training of Afghan security forces so that the Afghan people can provide for their own security. That kind of coordination and a sense on the part of President Karzai that after some difficult years in which there's been some drift, that in fact, he's going to move boldly and forcefully forward and take advantage of the international community's interest in his country to initiate reforms internally. That has to be one of our highest priorities.

He assured me that he understood the importance of this moment, but as I indicated to him, the proof is not going to be in words; it's going to be in deeds. And we are looking forward to consulting closely with his Government in the weeks and months to come to assure that the Afghan people are actually seeing progress on the ground.

The last point I would just make, the European Union obviously is an important trading partner of ours. We are seeing a world economy stabilize after a very difficult period of time. I think Fredrik would agree that it is absolutely critical that we continue to coordinate closely when it comes to our economic policies to assure that we are moving in a direction of more robust growth that creates more jobs in the United States and in Europe and that we continue to shy away from any protectionist measures that might actually reverse some of these positive trends.

So once again, welcome. Thank you for your outstanding work both as Prime Minister and as President. And please communicate the

very warm feelings that the United States people have towards the people of Sweden.

Prime Minister Reinfeldt. Yes, we will.

Well, thank you very much, Barack. As you said, we have met on several occasions. We share excellent bilateral relations. And this is also a strong transatlantic link, which is very important for us.

We have discussed, as mentioned, the Afghanistan situation. And the European Union has also said that we're glad that we now can see a second term for Karzai, that it's now concluded. We talked about long-term commitment in Afghanistan. We actually have 500 Swedish troops there. We're up to 35,000 now on the European Union side. It's very important, as Barack mentioned, to see this as both creating security but also in governance issues, which would be of utmost importance to have a ownership of their own in creating sustainable working conditions, living conditions for the people of Afghanistan.

The main issue was, as it often is now, the climate issue. We need to work together. We need to find ours—find each other in the process to meet the two-degree target when it comes to Copenhagen and the time thereafter. And we have spoken today, I think, about that again.

So I thank you very much for your leadership on that issue.

President Obama. Thank you for the visit.

Prime Minister Reinfeldt. Thank you.

President Obama. Okay, guys, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Reinfeldt also spoke in his capacity as President of the European Council.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany November 3, 2009

President Obama. Hello, everybody. Well, I'm just going to make a brief statement. I am thrilled to have Chancellor Merkel here today. I want to congratulate her again for her victory in her recent election, the formation of a Government, and we are honored to have her visit the Oval Office.

But the main reason she's here is that a great honor has been bestowed upon her. She is going to be the first German Chancellor in 50 years to address Congress, the first Chancellor ever to address a joint session of Congress. And it is, I think, a very appropriate honor that's been bestowed on Chancellor

Merkel. Obviously, the alliance between the United States and Germany has been an extraordinary pillar of the transatlantic relationship.

We are now moving towards the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down and Germany being reunified after so many painful years. And this is a special moment for Chancellor Merkel, as somebody who grew up in East Germany, who understands what it's like to be under the shadow of a dictatorial regime, and to see how freedom has bloomed in Germany, how it has become the centerpiece for an extraordinarily strong European Union.

I think all of these things converge, and we are very pleased that she's going to be here to spread her view of what's taking place in the world, the many challenges we face, to Members of Congress and the American people.

I should just note that Germany has been an extraordinarily strong ally on a whole host of international issues. We appreciate the sacrifices of German soldiers in Afghanistan and our common work there to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan and to create the environment in which the Afghan people themselves can provide for their own security.

Chancellor Merkel has been an extraordinary leader on the issue of climate change. And the United States, Germany, and countries around the world, I think, are all beginning to recognize why it is so important that we work in common in order to stem the potential catastrophe that could result if we continue to see global warming continuing unabated.

And on economic issues, on issues like nuclear proliferation, consistently I found Chancellor Merkel to be thoughtful, to be energetic, and to have a strong vision of how we can move forward in the future.

So I am very pleased to be working with her as a partner. We are thankful, Chancellor, for your leadership not just in Europe but around the world. And I'm looking forward to many more years in which the American people and the German people are working together to ex-

pand the boundaries of freedom and to create prosperity for ordinary men and women on both sides of the Atlantic.

So thank you so much for coming.

Chancellor Merkel. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you.

[At this point, Chancellor Merkel spoke in German.]

President Obama. I think what she said was good. [Laughter] I'm teasing.

[Chancellor Merkel's remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]

Chancellor Merkel. First of all, I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to be able to be here again today. I would also like to say that it is, obviously, a very great honor for me to address today the joint session of the—of Congress, both Houses of Congress, as it were.

But I'm also very much looking forward to having an exchange of view with the President again. We have always had very intensive discussions, and we're going to have those today again on issues that are of mutual interest to us and that we have been working on almost daily. We are working and discussing issues, for example, related to climate change, Afghanistan, Iran, and obviously, also the world economic situation.

But I wanted to use this opportunity today also to express our gratitude, my gratitude, to the American people for the support that the American people have given us throughout the process leading up to German reunification, and I think it is something that I would like to later on say it very clearly also in my speech to both Houses of Congress. And let me tell you, it is something that we, the Germans, shall never forget.

President Obama. All right, thank you guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:14 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With European Union Leaders November 3, 2009

President Obama. Well, I want to welcome, for the second day in a row, Prime Minister Reinholdt. I also want to recognize President Barroso and Javier Solana. These three gentlemen, obviously, represent the leadership and the increasing integration, successful integration, that's been taking place in Europe.

I congratulated them on the completion of the Lisbon Treaty, which will further move Europe in the direction of integration, not only on economic policy, but also on a number of security issues. I believe that a strengthened and renewed EU will be an even better transatlantic partner with the United States. And so, we are extraordinarily appreciative and supportive of the efforts that they've made and the leadership of these three gentlemen.

Our discussions today built upon my April meeting with all 27 EU leaders in Prague. We discussed our shared commitment to success in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where EU civilian assistance has played an absolutely critical role. We discussed climate change extensively, and all of us agreed that it was imperative for us to redouble our efforts in the weeks between now and the Copenhagen meeting to assure that we create a framework for progress in dealing with what is a potential ecological disaster. We discussed the situation in Iran and emphasized how important it is for the United States and the European Union to coordinate carefully and closely in sending a clear message to Tehran that we want them to be a full member of the community of nations, but that they have to act consistent with international rules and responsibilities with respect to their nuclear program.

We reaffirmed our commitment to strong, sustained economic growth that was articulated by the G-20 in Pittsburgh and reaffirmed our intent to continue to expand trade and resist protectionist measures between the United States and the European Union. And we spoke about how we can actually coordinate more effectively in preventing terrorism from spreading between our various countries. We also had a discussion about the Middle East

and how we can work together closely on that front.

Overall, I want to say a special congratulations to President Barroso, who's been reelected for another 5-year term. He has done an excellent job in his role with the Commission. And I want to thank Fredrik for the leadership that he's shown on a wide range of issues, not just within Europe, but around the globe, as well. Javier has been a critical partner with us in dealing with the Iran issue. So these three gentlemen have shown global leadership. I'm glad they had a chance to visit the United States, and I'm absolutely committed to continuing to strengthen the transatlantic partnership that this meeting represents.

Prime Minister Reinholdt. Well, thank you very much, Barack. Thank you for the hospitality. This is also very important for Europe to value this close cooperation with the United States and—since we share the same values. And I think we had a very good meeting.

We had at length a discussion about climate change. And I want to say that we need an agreement that can deliver on the two-degree target that could give us a solution on financing and that is global and that keeps—puts everyone together. That is what we need to see.

And I want to say that I think President Obama has shown real leadership on this issue. When we talk to people here in the United States, they all come back to this, that President Obama himself is very committed. He has great knowledge in this item, and we have great hopes for your leadership in this issue.

When it comes to Afghanistan, we also have a close partnership in Afghanistan. We have a huge representation also on European Union side. We have 35,000 troopers there and more than a billion euros a year that we actually immersed in development resources given to Afghanistan. So, of course, we need to have a close working relation when it comes to finding a way for Afghani ownership of the development in Afghanistan.

We actually have also delivered on four points. We have a start on cooperating on