

Thank you very much, everybody. All right. Thank you. God bless, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m.

Statement on the 30th Anniversary of the Seizure of the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran *November 4, 2009*

Thirty years ago today, the American Embassy in Tehran was seized. The 444 days that began on November 4, 1979, deeply affected the lives of courageous Americans who were unjustly held hostage, and we owe these Americans and their families our gratitude for their extraordinary service and sacrifice.

This event helped set the United States and Iran on a path of sustained suspicion, mistrust, and confrontation. I have made it clear that the United States of America wants to move beyond this past and seeks a relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran based upon mutual interests and mutual respect. We do not interfere in Iran's internal affairs. We have condemned terrorist attacks against Iran. We have recognized Iran's international right to peaceful nuclear power. We have demonstrated our willingness to take confidence-building steps along with others in the international community. We have accepted a proposal by the International Atomic Energy Agency to meet Iran's request

for assistance in meeting the medical needs of its people. We have made clear that if Iran lives up to the obligations that every nation has, it will have a path to a more prosperous and productive relationship with the international community.

Iran must choose. We have heard for 30 years what the Iranian Government is against; the question now is what kind of future it is for. The American people have great respect for the people of Iran and their rich history. The world continues to bear witness to their powerful calls for justice and their courageous pursuit of universal rights. It is time for the Iranian Government to decide whether it wants to focus on the past, or whether it will make the choices that will open the door to greater opportunity, prosperity, and justice for its people.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Persian language version of this statement.

Remarks at a White House Event Celebrating Classical Music *November 4, 2009*

Thank you. Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House. Michelle and I are delighted to host the fourth evening in a series showcasing the achievements of American musicians.

I'd like to welcome the many Members of Congress who've joined us tonight. Despite what you may have heard, they are actually a civilized bunch. *[Laughter]* Please join me in acknowledging our outstanding Secretary of Veterans Affairs Ric Shinseki is here as well, doing a tremendous job on behalf of our wounded warriors. I would also like to welcome the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, a group of men and women dedicated to

inspiring creative endeavors and strengthening America's deep commitment to the arts. And I understand that you had a wonderful program this afternoon and this morning with Michelle.

It's been a busy day of classical music here at the White House. Earlier, more than 100 students participated in a terrific workshop and concert led by tonight's performers. I want to thank those performers for coming to share their passion and their talent with us tonight: Joshua Bell, Sharon Isbin, Awadagin Pratt, and Alisa Weilerstein.

Any one of them would tell you that they're only here because of the hard work, dedication, and the fact that somebody along the way was