

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the Bella Center. President Medvedev spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an

interpreter. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Observance of the Hmong New Year December 18, 2009

Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to those who are celebrating the Hmong New Year. Over the course of decades, Hmong have come to this country in times of great difficulty, often as refugees escaping persecution. In Southeast Asia, many helped the people of the United States and emigrated here in a period of great strife. Through struggle and sacrifice, they built communities and families and have reminded us of what is best about America. Hmong men and women have come to this country to build a better life, and through their

culture and contribution, they have enriched America as well.

The Hmong New Year is traditionally celebrated at the end of the harvest season and marks a time filled with great food, colorful clothes, the music of the *qeej*, and enjoyable games. It is a time for family and community as people gather to bring good luck for the New Year. With that spirit in mind, I wish those celebrating Hmong New Year a prosperous and healthy New Year. *Xyoo tshiab*.

The President's News Conference in Copenhagen December 18, 2009

The President. Let me start with a statement, and then I'll take a couple of questions.

Today we've made meaningful and unprecedented—made a meaningful and unprecedented breakthrough here in Copenhagen. For the first time in history, all major economies have come together to accept their responsibility to take action to confront the threat of climate change.

Now let me first recount what our approach was throughout the year and coming into this conference. To begin with, we've reaffirmed America's commitment to transform our energy economy at home. We've made historic investments in renewable energy that have already put people back to work. We've raised our fuel efficiency standards, and we have renewed American leadership in international climate negotiations.

Most importantly, we remain committed to comprehensive legislation that will create millions of new American jobs, power new industry, and enhance our national security by reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

That effort at home serves as a foundation for our leadership around the world. Because of

the actions we're taking, we came here to Copenhagen with an ambitious target to reduce our emissions. We agreed to join an international effort to provide financing to help developing countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, adapt to climate change, and we reaffirmed the necessity of listing our national actions and commitments in a transparent way.

And these three components, transparency, mitigation, and finance, form the basis of the common approach that the United States and our partners embraced here in Copenhagen. Throughout the day, we worked with many countries to establish a new consensus around these three points, a consensus that will serve as a foundation for global action to confront the threat of climate change for years to come.

Now, this success would have not been possible without the hard work of many countries and many leaders. And I have to add that because of weather constraints in Washington, I am leaving before the final vote, but we feel confident that we are moving in the direction of a significant accord.

In addition to our close allies who did so much to advance this effort, I worked