

explosive device incident on Northwest Airlines Flight 253. The Office of the Press Secre-

tary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Statement on the Observance of Kwanzaa *December 28, 2009*

Michelle and I send warm wishes to all those celebrating Kwanzaa this holiday season. This is a joyous time of year when African Americans and all Americans come together to celebrate our blessings and the richness of our cultural traditions. This is also a time of reflection and renewal as we come to the end of one year and the beginning of another. The Kwanzaa message tells us that we should recall the lessons of the past even as we seize the promise of tomorrow.

The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose,

creativity, and faith—express the values that have inspired us as individuals and families, communities and country. These same principles have sustained us as a nation during our darkest hours and provided hope for better days to come. Michelle and I know the challenges facing many African American families and families in all communities at this time, but we also know the spirit of perseverance and hope that is ever present in the community. It is in this spirit that our family extends our prayers and best wishes during this season and for the new year to come.

## Remarks in Kaneohe *December 29, 2009*

Good morning. Yesterday I updated the American people on the immediate steps we took, the increased screening and security of air travel, to keep our country safe in the wake of the attempted terrorist attack on Christmas Day. And I announced two reviews, a review of our terrorist watch list system and a review of our air travel screening, so we can find out what went wrong, fix it, and prevent future attacks.

Those reviews began on Sunday and are now underway. Earlier today I issued the former [formal]<sup>\*</sup> guidelines for those reviews and directed that preliminary findings be provided to the White House by this Thursday. It's essential that we diagnose the problems quickly and deal with them immediately.

Now, the more comprehensive, formal reviews and recommendations for improvement will be completed in the coming weeks, and I'm committed to working with Congress and our intelligence, law enforcement, and home-

land security communities to take all necessary steps to protect the country.

I wanted to speak to the American people again today because some of this preliminary information that has surfaced in the last 24 hours raises some serious concerns. It's been widely reported that the father of the suspect in the Christmas incident warned U.S. officials in Africa about his son's extremist views. It now appears that weeks ago, this information was passed to a component of our intelligence community, but was not effectively distributed so as to get the suspect's name on a no-fly list.

There appears to be other deficiencies as well. Even without this one report, there were bits of information available within the intelligence community that could have and should have been pieced together. We've achieved much since 9/11 in terms of collecting information that relates to terrorists and potential terrorist attacks, but it's becoming clear that the system that has been in place for years now is not sufficiently up to date to take full

---

<sup>\*</sup> White House correction.