

Videotaped Remarks on the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day *April 13, 2010*

Forty-one years ago, in the city of Cleveland, people watched in horror as the Cuyahoga River, choked with debris and covered in oil, caught on fire. Images of the burning Cuyahoga shocked a nation, and it led one Wisconsin Senator the following year to organize the first Earth Day to call attention to the dangers of ignoring our environment.

In the four decades since, we've made remarkable progress. Today, our air and water are cleaner, pollution's been greatly reduced, and Americans everywhere are living in a healthier environment. We've passed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and founded the Environmental Protection Agency. And in Cleveland, the Cuyahoga River is cleaner than it's been in 100 years.

But the true story of the environmental movement is not about the laws that have been passed. It's about the citizens who've come together time and time again to demand cleaner air, healthier drinking water, and safer food and who've demanded that their representatives in government hold polluters accountable.

That progress continues today, as individuals and entrepreneurs across the country help lay the foundation for a clean energy economy one solar panel or smart meter and energy-efficient home at a time.

Since taking office, my administration's been a partner in the fight for a healthier environment. Through the Recovery Act, we've invested in clean energy and clean water infrastructure across the country. We're taking the necessary steps to keep our children safe and hold polluters accountable. And we've rejected the notion that we have to choose between creating jobs and a healthy environment, be-

cause we know that the economy of the 21st century will be built on infrastructure powered by clean energy.

But even though we've made significant progress, there is much more to do. And as we continue to tackle our environmental challenges, it's clear that change won't come from Washington alone. It will come from Americans across the country who take steps in their own homes and their own communities to make that change happen.

That's why, as we get ready to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, I want to leave you with a challenge. I want you to take action in your home or your community, at your school or your business, to improve our environment. It can be as simple as riding the bus or the subway to work, making your home more energy efficient, or organizing your neighbors to clean up a nearby park.

Just go to whitehouse.gov/earthday to learn how you can help. And then tell us your story about what you're doing to make a difference.

In the end, it's people like you, the small-business owners and community leaders, the teachers and the students, the young people and the grandparents, who've made Earth Day so successful. And it's going to be up to you to make an even bigger difference over the next 40 years.

So let's get to work. Together, we can continue to make progress towards a cleaner environment and a healthier planet.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 5:55 p.m. on March 19 in the Green Room at the White House for later broadcast.

Statement on Russia's Decision to Shut Down the Zheleznogorsk Plutonium Reactor *April 13, 2010*

I welcome this significant announcement from President Medvedev. This important step forward continues to demonstrate Rus-

sia's leadership on nuclear security issues and will add momentum to our shared global effort.

Message to the Congress on Blocking Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Conflict in Somalia

April 13, 2010

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631 (NEA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the “order”) blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Somalia. In that order, I declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by that conflict, as described below.

The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1844 of November 20, 2008, reaffirmed its condemnation of all acts of violence in Somalia and incitement to violence inside Somalia, and expressed its concern at all acts intended to prevent or block a peaceful political process. United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1844 also expressed grave concern over the recent increase in acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea against vessels off the coast of Somalia, and noted the role piracy may play in financing violations of the arms embargo on Somalia imposed by UNSCR 733 of January 23, 1992. In UNSCR 1844, the United Nations Security Council determined that the situation in Somalia poses a threat to international peace and security in the region and called on member States to apply certain measures against persons responsible for the continuing conflict. The United Nations Security Council has continued to express grave concern about the crisis in Somalia in UNSCR 1846 of December 2, 2008, UNSCR 1851 of December 16, 2008, and UNSCR 1872 of May 26, 2009.

Pursuant to the IEEPA and the NEA, I have determined that the deterioration of the security situation and the persistence of violence in Somalia, and acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

The order declares a national emergency to deal with this threat.

The order is not targeted at the entire country of Somalia, but rather is intended to target those who threaten peace and stability in Somalia, who inhibit the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia or the distribution of such assistance in Somalia, or who supply arms or related materiel in violation of the arms embargo. The order blocks the property and interests in property in the United States, or in the possession or control of United States persons, of the persons listed in the Annex to the order, as well as of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to have engaged in acts that directly or indirectly threaten the peace, security, or stability of Somalia, including but not limited to (1) acts that threaten the Djibouti Agreement of August 18, 2008, or the political process, or (2) acts that threaten the Transitional Federal Institutions, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), or other international peace-keeping operations related to Somalia;
- to have obstructed the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, or access to, or distribution of, humanitarian assistance in Somalia; or
- to have directly or indirectly supplied, sold, or transferred to Somalia, or to have been the recipient in the territory of Somalia of, arms or any related materiel, or any technical advice, training, or assistance, including financing and financial assistance, related to military activities.

The designation criteria will be applied in accordance with applicable Federal law including, where appropriate, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The designation criteria will also be applied taking into consideration the arms embargo on Somalia imposed by