

*Dec. 15 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010*

The United States condemns all acts of terrorism wherever they occur.

The United States stands with the families and loved ones of those killed and injured and with the Iranian people in the face of this injustice.

Together, the people of the world must condemn and oppose all forms of terrorism and support the universal right of human beings to live free from fear and senseless violence.

## Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Extend Tax Cuts and Unemployment Insurance Benefits *December 15, 2010*

Today the Senate passed with strong bipartisan support a bill that's a win for American families, American businesses, and our economic recovery. This vote brings us one step closer to ensuring that middle class families across the country won't have to worry about a massive tax hike at the end of the year. It would offer hope to millions of Americans who are out of work, that they won't suddenly find themselves without the unemployment insurance they need to make ends meet as they fight to find a job. And it would offer additional tax relief to families across the country and encourage businesses to grow and hire.

I know that not every Member of Congress likes every piece of this bill, and it includes some provisions that I oppose. But as a whole, this package will grow our economy, create jobs, and help middle class families across the country. As this bill moves to the House of Representatives, I hope that members from both parties can come together in a spirit of common purpose to protect American families and our economy as a whole by passing this essential economic package.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 4853. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

## Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Legislation Repealing the United States Military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy *December 15, 2010*

I applaud the House for passing, with bipartisan support, the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010." Legislative repeal is supported by the Secretary of Defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The process contained in this legislation allows for a smooth and responsible repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" in a way that maintains good order and discipline in our military ranks. Indeed, all of the service chiefs have said that when this law is changed, they will implement an orderly transition effectively and efficiently. As the comprehensive study by the Department of Defense clearly shows, we can move to a new policy in a responsible manner that ensures our military strength and our national security.

I particularly want to thank Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and Congressman Patrick Murphy for their leadership on this issue. I have consistently called for the repeal of this law. Moving forward with the repeal is not only the right thing to do, it will also give our military the clarity and certainty it deserves. We must ensure that Americans who are willing to risk their lives for their country are treated fairly and equally by their country.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 2965. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Global Deployments of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces December 15, 2010

*Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. Armed Forces equipped for combat.

### *MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST AL-QA'IDA, THE TALIBAN, AND ASSOCIATED FORCES AND IN SUPPORT OF RELATED U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM OBJECTIVES*

Since October 7, 2001, the United States has conducted combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qa'ida terrorists and their Taliban supporters. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat-equipped forces to a number of locations in the U.S. Central, Pacific, European, Southern, and Africa Command areas of operation. Previous such operations and deployments have been reported, consistent with Public Law 107–40 and the War Powers Resolution, and operations and deployments remain ongoing. These operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qa'ida's capabilities and brought an end to the Taliban's leadership of Afghanistan.

United States Armed Forces are actively pursuing and engaging remaining al-Qa'ida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. The total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is approximately 97,500, of which more than 81,500 are assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council most recently reaffirmed its authorization of ISAF for a 12-month period from October 13, 2010, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1943 (October 13, 2010). The mission of ISAF, under NATO command and in partnership with the Government of the Islamic

Republic of Afghanistan, is to conduct population-centric counterinsurgency operations, enable expanded and effective capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, support improved governance and development in order to protect the Afghan people, and promote sustainable security. Presently, 48 partner nations contribute to ISAF, including all 28 NATO Allies. These combat operations are gradually pushing insurgents to the edges of secured population areas in a number of important regions, largely resulting from the increase in U.S. forces over the past year. U.S. and ISAF forces will continue to execute the strategy of clear-shapehold-build, and transition, until conditions on the ground allow for the full transition of the lead in operations to the Afghan National Security Forces.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qa'ida, Taliban, and associated force fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped forces deployed since January 2002 to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, continue to conduct secure detention operations for the approximately 170 detainees at Guantanamo Bay under Public Law 107–40 and consistent with principles of the law of war.

In furtherance of U.S. efforts against members of al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, its friends, its allies, and U.S. forces abroad, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the U.S. Central Command's area of operations. In this context, the United States has deployed U.S. combat-equipped forces to assist in enhancing the counterterrorism capabilities of our friends and allies, including special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations around the world. The United States is committed to thwarting the efforts of al-Qa'ida and its associated forces to carry out future acts of international terrorism, and we have continued