

And so when I get that report, I'm sure that I'll have more comments on it. The bottom line is, is that striking this balance between our security and making sure that we are consistent with our values and our Constitution is not an easy task, but ultimately that's what's required for practical reasons.

Because the more people are reminded of what makes America special—the fact that we stand for something beyond just our economic power or our military might, but we have these core ideals that we observe even when it's hard—that's one of our most powerful weapons.

And I want to make sure that we don't lose that weapon in what is a serious struggle.

So with that, everybody, I want to wish you all a merry Christmas. Happy holidays. Happy New Year. See you in 2011.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:16 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to U.S. Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos, USMC; and Steven P. Jobs, chief executive officer, Apple Inc.

## Statement on the Inauguration of Alpha Conde as President of Guinea December 22, 2010

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the people of Guinea as they witness the inauguration of their first democratically elected President since becoming an independent state in 1958. Just over a year ago, the world's attention was drawn to Guinea by horrifying atrocities and dangerous instability. Today, people all over the world are coming together to congratulate Guinea and to express genuine admiration for the voters who steadfastly acted to support peace and democracy. They have set their country on a path for a more prosperous and stable future.

As the country begins its new democratic era, I extend congratulations to President Alpha Conde on his inauguration. I also express my appreciation for the way in which Cellou Dalein Diallo gracefully accepted the outcome of the election and spoke of the importance of a unified

Guinea in moving forward. While the road ahead may be challenging, the United States looks forward to working with the incoming administration as it pursues an inclusive government that represents the people of Guinea irrespective of ethnicity, religion, and gender; establishes a platform of economic development for all to realize the dividends of democracy; and works to enact critical reforms in the security sector.

The past year will remain a powerful example of how a country at such a pivotal moment can make a choice for a better future, and the responsibility of those in positions of authority to put the country first. As such, I also recognize and honor the leadership of interim President General Sekouba Konate, who provided the necessary vision and support for Guinea's historic transition.

## The President's Weekly Address December 25, 2010

*The President.* Merry Christmas, everybody. Michelle and I just wanted to take a moment today to send greetings from our family to yours.

*The First Lady.* This is one of our favorite times of year. And we're so fortunate to be able to celebrate it together in this wonderful home.

This is the people's house. So Barack and I try to open it to as many people as we can, especially during the holiday season.

This month, more than 100,000 Americans have passed through these halls. And the idea behind this year's theme, "Simple Gifts," is that the greatest blessings of all are the ones that don't cost a thing: the comfort of spending time

with loved ones, the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, and the joy we feel upon giving something of ourselves.

So in this time of family and friends and good cheer, let's also be sure to look out for those who are less fortunate, who've hit a run of bad luck, or who are hungry and alone this holiday season.

*The President.* Because this is the season when we celebrate the simplest yet most profound gift of all: the birth of a child who devoted his life to a message of peace, love, and redemption. A message that says no matter who we are, we are called to love one another; we are our brother's keeper, we are our sister's keeper, our separate stories in this big and busy world are really one.

Today we're also thinking of those who can't be home for the holidays, especially all our courageous countrymen serving overseas.

That's the message I delivered when I visited our troops in Afghanistan a few weeks ago, that while you may be serving far from home, every American supports you and your families. We are with you. And I have no greater honor than serving as your Commander in Chief.

Today's soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen make up the finest fighting force in the history of the world. Just like their predecessors, they do extraordinary things in service to their country. What makes that all the more remarkable is that today's military is an all-volunteer force, a force of mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives.

*The First Lady.* That's right. And as First Lady, I've had the honor to meet members of our military and their families on bases and in communities all across the country. I've gotten to know husbands and wives doing the parenting of two while their spouse is on another deployment, children trying their best in school but always wondering when mom or dad is coming home, patriots putting their lives on hold to help with a loved one's recovery or carry on the memory of a fallen hero.

When our men and women in uniform answer the call to serve, their families serve too. And they're proud and glad to do it. But as long

as that service keeps the rest of us safe, their sacrifice should also be our own. Even heroes can use a hand, especially during the holidays.

*The President.* So we're encouraging Americans to ask what you can do to support our troops and their families in this holiday season. For some ideas on how to get started, just visit [serve.gov](http://serve.gov).

*The First Lady.* You'll see that you don't need to be an expert in military life to give back to those who give so much to us. There are countless ways to contribute by harnessing your unique talents.

If you live near a base, you can reach out through your local school or your church. If you don't, you can volunteer with organizations that support military families. And anybody can send a care package or prepaid calling card to the frontlines or give what's sometimes the most important gift of all: simply saying thank you.

*The President.* America's brave service men and women represent a small fraction of our population. But they and the families who await their safe return carry far more than their fair share of the burden. They've done everything they've been asked to do. They've been everything we've asked them to be. And even as we speak, many are fighting halfway around the globe, in hopes that someday our children and grandchildren won't have to.

So let's all remind them this holiday season that we're thinking of them and that America will forever be here for them, just as they've been there for us.

And on behalf of Michelle, Malia, Sasha—

*The First Lady.* —and Bo.

*The President.* —and Bo, have a very merry Christmas.

*The First Lady.* —and an even happier New Year.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:30 p.m. on December 17 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on December 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 24, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 25.

## Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Khar, Pakistan

December 25, 2010

I strongly condemn the outrageous terrorist attack in Khar, Pakistan. Killing innocent civilians outside a World Food Programme distribution point is an affront to the people of Pakistan and

to all humanity. The United States stands with the people of Pakistan in this difficult time and will strongly support Pakistan's efforts to ensure greater peace, security, and justice for its people.

## Statement on the Observance of Kwanzaa

December 26, 2010

Michelle and I extend our warmest thoughts and wishes to all those who are celebrating Kwanzaa this holiday season. Today is the first of a joyful 7-day celebration of African American culture and heritage. The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—are some of the very values that make us Americans.

As families across America and around the world light the *kinara* today in the spirit of *umojaa*, or unity, our family sends our well wishes and blessings for a happy and healthy new year.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

## Statement on the First Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack on Central Intelligence Agency Personnel in Afghanistan

December 30, 2010

One year ago today, at a remote outpost at Khost, Afghanistan, seven American patriots showed us the true meaning of honor, integrity, and selfless sacrifice. For their colleagues and friends at the CIA, it was a heartbreaking loss of experienced veterans and young officers who served on the frontlines in the fight to keep our Nation safe. For Americans to whom the work of our intelligence community is largely unknown, it was a rare glimpse into the risks that our intelligence professionals accept in defense of the security and freedoms that we cherish. And for those of us who gathered at Langley last February to pay tribute to these seven heroes and to comfort their families, it was an occasion to rededicate ourselves to their work and to the ideals for which they died.

In the year since, that is what we have done. As President, I rely on our intelligence, military, and civilian personnel every day, and I know that our country is more secure and the American people are safer because of their extraordinary service. Today, Al Qaida's senior leadership is under more pressure than ever before

and is hunkered down in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan. We are relentlessly pursuing our mission to disrupt, dismantle, and ultimately defeat that terrorist organization. In the United States and around the world, plots have been thwarted, attacks have been disrupted, and the lives of Americans have been saved.

This is the legacy of the courageous Americans who gave their lives 1 year ago and whose stars now grace the Memorial Wall at Langley, just as it is the legacy of our troops who have given their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. As we mark the first anniversary of their sacrifice at Khost, this is the work to which we recommit ourselves today. We will ensure that our dedicated intelligence professionals have the training and tools they need to meet the missions we ask of them. We will do everything in our power to ensure the safety and security of the American people. And like our seven patriots at Khost, we will never waver in defense of the security and liberties that keep America strong and free.