

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