

The President's Weekly Address *January 15, 2011*

It's been 1 week since tragedy visited Tucson, Arizona. We properly spent much of the week mourning the victims and remembering their lives. We also discovered stories that serve to lift us up, stories of heroism and bravery, of courage and community, stories that remind us that we are one American family, 300 million strong.

One of the places we saw that sense of community on display was on the floor of the House of Representatives, where Gabby Giffords, who inspires us with her recovery, is deeply missed by her colleagues. One by one, Representatives from all parts of the country and all points of view rose in common cause to honor Gabby and the other victims and to reflect on our shared hopes for this country.

As shrill and discordant as our politics can be at times, it was a moment that reminded us of who we really are and how much we depend on one another. While we can't escape our grief for those we've lost, we carry on now, mindful of those truths.

We carry on because we have to. After all, this is still a time of great challenges for us to solve. We've got to grow jobs faster and forge a stronger, more competitive economy. We've got to shore up our budget and bring down our

deficits. We've got to keep our people safe and see to it that the American Dream remains vibrant and alive for our children and our grandchildren.

These are challenges I believe we can meet. And I believe we can do it in a way worthy of those who sent us here to serve. So as business resumes, I look forward to working together in that same spirit of common cause with Members of Congress from both parties, because before we are Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans.

And as we perform the work of this Nation, my prayer is that we stay true to our words and turn to those examples of heroism and courage and perseverance to bring out the better in all of us.

Thanks for listening, and have a wonderful weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:20 p.m. on January 14 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on January 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 15.

Statement on the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum *January 16, 2011*

The United States congratulates the Sudanese people, the Government of Sudan, and the Government of Southern Sudan on the end of their historic, week-long referendum on the future of Southern Sudan. The sight of so many Sudanese casting their votes in a peaceful and orderly fashion was an inspiration to the world and a tribute to the determination of the people and leaders of south Sudan to forge a better future. We wish to commend the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, the Southern Sudan Referendum Board, the domestic and international observers, the United

Nations Mission in Sudan, and most of all, the voters, who turned out in high numbers and high spirits to take their turn at the ballot box. The past week has given the world renewed faith in the prospect of a peaceful, prosperous future for all of the Sudanese people, a future that the American people long to see in Sudan.

The referendum now moves into another phase, and while official results will not be available for some time, independent observers have been extremely encouraged by the credibility of the process to date. We urge all parties to continue to urge calm and show

restraint as the parties work to complete implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The United States will con-

tinue to assist the parties amid the tough challenges and historic opportunities that lie ahead.

Remarks at a Service Event at Stuart-Hobson Middle School *January 17, 2011*

This is just a outstanding program and an example of what Martin Luther King's birthday should be all about. I want to thank all the mentees and mentors who are participating.

Dr. King obviously had a dream of justice and equality in our society, but he also had a dream of service, that you could be a drum major for service; you could lead by giving back to our communities. And that's what this program is all about, and that's what these participants are all about.

Michelle and I and the girls are extraordinarily proud that each year on Martin Luther King's birthday, this is how we celebrate—is

making sure that we're giving a little something back to the community. And I hope that all the projects that are taking place all across the country on this day are getting similar attention, because this is part of what America is all about. And after a painful week where so many of us were focused on tragedy, it's good for us to remind ourselves of what this country is all about. This kind of service project is what's best in us, and we're thrilled with everybody who is participating.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m.

Statement on the United Nations Special Tribunal for Lebanon Indictment *January 17, 2011*

I welcome the announcement by the Office of the Prosecutor for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon today that he has filed an indictment relating to the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and 22 others. This action represents an important step toward ending the era of impunity for murder in Lebanon and achieving justice for the Lebanese people. I know that this is a significant and emotional time for the Lebanese people, and we join the international community in calling on all Lebanese leaders and factions to preserve calm and exercise restraint. The United States is a strong friend of Lebanon, and we stand steadfastly with others in support of Lebanese sovereignty, independence, and stability.

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon must be allowed to continue its work, free from interference and coercion. That is the way to ad-

vance the search for the truth, the cause of justice, and the future of Lebanon. Those who have tried to manufacture a crisis and force a choice between justice or stability in Lebanon are offering a false choice, as the Lebanese people have a right to both justice and stability, and efforts to undercut the STL only legitimize its efforts and suggest its opponents have something to hide. Any attempt to fuel tensions and instability, in Lebanon or in the region, will only undermine the very freedom and aspirations that the Lebanese people seek and that so many nations support. At this critical moment, all friends of Lebanon must stand with the people of Lebanon.

NOTE: The statement referred to Daniel A. Bellemare, Prosecutor, United Nations Special Tribunal for Lebanon.