

violence against civilians and the advances of Qadhafi's forces. But despite the hollow words of his Government, he has ignored that opportunity. His attacks on his own people have continued. His forces have been on the move. And the danger faced by the people of Libya has grown.

I am deeply aware of the risks of any military action, no matter what limits we place on it. I want the American people to know that the use of force is not our first choice, and it's not a choice that I make lightly. But we cannot stand idly by when a tyrant tells his people that there will be no mercy, and his forces step up their assaults on cities like Benghazi and Misurata, where innocent men and women face brutality and death at the hands of their own Government.

So we must be clear: Actions have consequences, and the writ of the international community must be enforced. That is the cause of this coalition.

As a part of this effort, the United States will contribute our unique capabilities at the front end of the mission to protect Libyan civilians and enable the enforcement of a no-fly zone that will be led by our international partners. And as I said yesterday, we will not—I re-

peat—we will not deploy any U.S. troops on the ground.

As Commander in Chief, I have great confidence in the men and women of our military who will carry out this mission. They carry with them the respect of a grateful nation.

I'm also proud that we are acting as part of a coalition that includes close allies and partners who are prepared to meet their responsibility to protect the people of Libya and uphold the mandate of the international community.

I've acted after consulting with my national security team and Republican and Democratic leaders of Congress. And in the coming hours and days, my administration will keep the American people fully informed. But make no mistake: Today, we are part of a broad coalition. We are answering the calls of a threatened people. And we are acting in the interests of the United States and the world.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. at the Tryp Convention Brasil 21 Center. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Statement on the Death of Warren M. Christopher

March 19, 2011

Michelle and I were saddened to hear that Warren Christopher has passed away. Deeply dedicated to serving his country, Warren's career ranged from the Naval Reserve in World War II to a clerkship at the Supreme Court to the practice of law and politics in California and Washington. And as President Clinton's Secretary of State, he was a resolute pursuer of

peace, leading negotiations with regard to the Middle East and the Balkans, including the Dayton Agreement, which ended the war in Bosnia. Warren Christopher was a skillful diplomat, a steadfast public servant, and a faithful American. We send our thoughts and prayers to his wife Marie and their children.

Remarks in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

March 20, 2011

The President. Hello, Rio de Janeiro!

Audience members. Hello!

Audience member. Many welcomes!

The President. Alo, Cidade Maravilhosa! Boa tarde, todo o povo brasileiro.

Since the moment we arrived, the people of this nation have graciously shown my family the warmth and generosity of the Brazilian spirit. *Obrigado.* Thank you. And I want to give a special thanks for you—to all of you for being