

all that fades away when we are confronted with the awesome power of nature. And we're reminded that all we have is each other.

And so, hopefully, that spirit continues and grows. If nothing else comes out of this tragedy, let's hope that that's one of the things that comes out.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Kevin Burgess, battalion chief, Tuscaloosa Fire and Rescue Service; and Derek Johns and Ellery Schnell, students, University of Alabama.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Executive Order Blocking Property of Certain Persons With Respect to Human Rights Abuses in Syria *April 29, 2011*

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

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that expands the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008.

In Executive Order 13338, the President found that the actions of the Government of Syria constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and declared a national emergency to deal with that threat. To address that threat and to implement the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-175), the President in Executive Order 13338 blocked the property of certain persons and imposed additional prohibitions on certain transactions with respect to Syria.

I have determined that the Government of Syria's human rights abuses, including those related to the repression of the people in Syria, manifested most recently by the use of violence and torture against, and arbitrary arrests and detentions of, peaceful protestors by police, security forces, and other entities that have engaged in human rights abuses, constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and warrant the imposition of additional sanctions.

The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons listed in the Annex to the order. The order also provides criteria for designations of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, or to have participated in, the commission of human rights abuses in Syria, including those related to repression;
- to be a senior official of an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, human rights abuses in Syria, or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to Executive Order 13338, Executive Order 13460, or the order; or
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to Executive Order 13460 or the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the

President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. I have also delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to determine that circumstances no longer warrant the blocking of the property and interests in property of a person listed in the Annex to the order, and to take necessary action to give effect to that determination.

The order was effective at 1:00 p.m. eastern daylight time on April 29, 2011. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures with-

in their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions of the Government of Syria

April 29, 2011

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions of the Government of Syria declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008, is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2011.

The Syrian government has reduced the number of foreign fighters bound for Iraq—although the fighters have still created serious problems there—but its actions and policies, including continuing support for terrorist organizations, damaging the Lebanese government's ability to function, and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and missile programs,

pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency declared with respect to this threat and to maintain in force the sanctions to address this national emergency. In addition, the United States condemns the use of violence against peacefully demonstrating citizens in Syria, and calls on the Syrian government to respect human rights and to forge a credible path to a future of greater freedom, democracy, opportunity, and justice. As we have communicated to the Syrian government directly, the United States will consider changes in the policies and actions of the Government of Syria in determining whether to continue or terminate this national emergency in the future.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.