

President. Frankly, Michelle would have been happy if I had just kept on teaching and writing books. And the girls, they're happy wherever they go; they are just thriving. The reason we're going to put ourselves through this thing one more time, because our job's not finished, and I believe in finishing something that we started.

But I'm going to need your help. The only way that we're going to be able to assure that we are passing on to this next generation the America that we believe in is if we are putting our shoulder to the wheel one more time. And one thing we discovered in 2008, when we put our shoulder to the wheel, when all of us together, collectively, fight for what we believe in, what we hold most dear, what we hold in common, our deepest values and ideals, nobody can stop us. Nobody can stop us.

So I mentioned to the group earlier, I'm a little grayer than I was in 2008. *[Laughter]* It's

not as cool to be an Obama supporter as it was in 2008, with the posters and all that stuff. *[Laughter]* But the values that motivated me haven't changed, and I hope they haven't changed for you either. And if we do our part, then I think 2012 will just be an extension of what we started in 2008 and we can look back with great pride about what we accomplished, because I think we will be able to right this ship and make sure that America is heading for a brighter day.

So thanks very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:51 p.m. at the residence of Jean-Philippe and Magalie Austin. In his remarks, he referred to Stefanie, Jessica, Adele, and Natalie Austin, daughters of Jean-Philippe and Magalie Austin; and Supreme Court Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

## Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony in San Juan, Puerto Rico

June 14, 2011

*Buenas tardes!* Ah, it is good to be back in Puerto Rico. It is great to see so many familiar faces, so many advocates for the island. First of all, I want to acknowledge Congressman Pierluisi is here. Where is he? Right over there. My great friend Andres Lopez, Francisco Pavia, Senator Bhatia, Governor Fortuno, and I know that we've got some former Governors here today, along with leaders of local parties and of the House and the Senate.

I am so grateful for the unbelievable reception. As you know, the last President to come to San Juan and address the people of Puerto Rico was John F. Kennedy, nearly 50 years ago. Now, at the time, I was about 4 months old—*[laughter]*—so my memory of this visit is a little hazy. What I do remember is that when I came here to campaign, I promised that I would return as President of the United States. And although my hair is a little grayer than during my first visit, I am glad to be able to keep that promise to the people of Puerto Rico.

But this is only one part of my commitment to families here on the island. Because when I

ran for President, I promised to include Puerto Rico not just on my itinerary, but also in my vision of where our country needs to go. And I am proud to say that we've kept that promise too.

First of all, we've addressed the question of political status. In March, a report from our Presidential task force on Puerto Rican status provided a meaningful way forward on this question so that the residents of the island can determine their own future. And when the people of Puerto Rico make a clear decision, my administration will stand by you.

I also know that there are plenty of other issues that the island is facing. When President Kennedy was here, he addressed the relationship between Washington and San Juan, and he also spoke about tackling what he called "the difficult problems of education and housing and employment."

In that same spirit, we've been trying to make sure that every family on the island can find work and make a living and provide for their children. That's why our economic plan

and our health care reform included help for Puerto Rico.

That's why we're increasing access to broadband and investing in education. That's why we're helping to grow local tourism and health care and clean energy industry. We're giving Puerto Ricans the tools they need to build their own economic futures.

And this is how it should be. Because every day, *Boricuas* help write the American story. Puerto Rican artists contribute to our culture. And by the way, I don't know if you noticed, but Marc Anthony decided to show up here today. Puerto Rican entrepreneurs create American jobs. Even in the NBA finals, J.J. Barea inspired all of us with those drives to the hoop. That guy can play. Next time I'm down here, I'm going to have to—next time I'm here, I'm going to have to play some hoops.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge all the Puerto Rican men and women who serve in our country's uniform. Give it up for our veterans. Thank you.

You know, one of those veterans is Juan Castillo. Juan fought in World War II, and he fought in the Korean war. Today, he's 2 months away from his 101st birthday. Juan's legacy is carried on by Puerto Ricans in Iraq and Afghanistan, men and women like Chief Master Sergeant Ramon Colon-Lopez of the United States Air Force. In 2004, Ramon's team was going after a high-value target in Afghanistan. His helicopter was seriously damaged by hostile fire. In the thick of battle, he didn't know how large the force that he was up against. But he pressed on anyway, and his team killed or captured 12 enemy fighters. Because of his bravery, he was the first Hispanic American to be awarded the Air Force Combat Action Medal.

And I tell this story because for decades, Puerto Ricans like Juan and Ramon have put themselves in harm's way for a simple reason: They want to protect the country that they love. Their willingness to serve, their willingness to sacrifice, is as American as apple pie—or as *arroz con gandules*. The aspirations and the struggles on this island mirror those across America.

So I know that today a lot of folks are asking some of the same questions here on the island as they're asking in Indiana or California or in Texas: How do I make sure my kids get the kind of education that they need? How can I put away a little money for retirement? How can I fill up my gas tank? How can I pay the bills?

Everywhere I go, I see families facing challenges like these, but they're facing them with resolve and determination. You know, these problems didn't develop overnight here in Puerto Rico or anywhere else, but that means we're not going to solve them overnight. But day by day, step by step, we will solve them.

We are going to be able to improve our education system here in Puerto Rico and all across America. We are making strides to improve our health care system here in Puerto Rico and all across America. We are going to put people back to work here in Puerto Rico and all across America.

Maybe some of you remember that when I was here in 2008, I spoke in front of the Cuartel de Ballaja, a site that had been home to so many chapters of Puerto Rican history. Today, Puerto Rican workers are writing the next chapter by turning the building into a model of energy efficiency. They're making HVAC systems more efficient. They're putting on a green roof. They're installing 720 photovoltaic panels. When they're done, it's estimated that the energy savings will be 57 percent. And Puerto Rico will have taken one more step towards creating a clean energy economy.

Those are the kinds of steps it will take for Puerto Rico to win the future and for America to win the future. That's what we do in this country. With each passing decade, with each new challenge, we reinvent ourselves. We find new ways to solve our problems. We push forward.

And we do so in a way that gives every one of our people a shot at the dream that we all share; the dream that if you're willing to work hard and take responsibility, you can build a better life for your family. You can find a job that's secure, provides decent wages, provides for your children, provides for your retirement.

That's what people are hoping for, and it's not too much to ask.

Puerto Rico, I don't need to tell you that we're not there yet. We're not where we need to be. But in these challenging times, people on this island don't quit. We don't turn back. People in America don't quit. We don't turn back. We place our bets on entrepreneurs and on workers and on our families. We understand that there is strength in our diversity. We renew the American Dream. We have done it before. We will do it again.

*Muchas gracias.* Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you, Puerto Rico.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:43 a.m. at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Andres Lopez, member, Democratic National Committee; Francisco Pavia, delegate, 2008 Democratic National Convention; Commonwealth Sen. Eduardo Bhatia and Gov. Luis G. Fortuno of Puerto Rico; musician Marc Anthony; and Jose J. Barea, point guard, National Basketball Association's Dallas Mavericks.

## Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions and Policies of Certain Members of the Government of Belarus and Other Persons To Undermine Belarus Democratic Processes or Institutions

June 14, 2011

*To the Congress of the United States:*

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 and related measures blocking the property of certain persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Belarus are to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2011.

The flawed December 2010 Presidential election in Belarus and its aftermath—the harsh violence against peaceful demonstrators; the continuing detention, prosecution, and imprisonment of opposition Presidential candidates and others; and the continuing repression of independent media and civil society activists—all show that the Government of Belarus has taken steps backward in the development of

democratic governance and respect for human rights. The actions and policies of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus democratic processes or institutions, to commit human rights abuses related to political repression, and to engage in public corruption pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared to deal with this threat and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
June 14, 2011.

NOTE: The message referred to opposition Presidential candidates Vladimir Neklyayev, Andrei Sannikov, Vital Rymasheuski, Nikolai Statkevich, and Dmitry Uss of Belarus. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.