

States was also one of the very first countries to recognize the independence of Tunisia.

At any rate, at the end of this visit I would like to reiterate my thanks to President Obama and assure him that in Tunisia he will always find a credible and sincere friend.

*President Obama.* Thank you, everybody.

*2011 Nobel Peace Prize Recipients*

*Q.* Mr. President, the women who won the Nobel today, any reaction?

*President Obama.* The three women who won the Nobel Prize today are all remarkable examples of not only their own determination and spirit, but also a reminder that when we empower women around the world, then ev-

eryone is better off, that the countries and cultures that respect the contributions of women inevitably end up being more successful than those that don't. All right?

Thank you very much.

*NOTE:* The President spoke at 4:32 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee, and Yemeni human rights activist Tawakkul Karman, recipients of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. Prime Minister Caid Essebsi spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

**Statement on the 10th Anniversary of the Commencement of United States Military Operations in Afghanistan**  
*October 7, 2011*

Ten years ago today, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, our Nation went to war against Al Qaida and its Taliban protectors in Afghanistan. As we mark a decade of sacrifice, Michelle and I join all Americans in saluting the more than half a million men and women who have served bravely in Afghanistan to keep our country safe, including our resilient wounded warriors who carry the scars of war, seen and unseen. We honor the memory of the nearly 1,800 American patriots and many coalition and Afghan partners who have made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan for our shared security and freedom. We pay tribute to our inspiring military families who have persevered at home with a loved one at war. And we are grateful to our tireless diplomats and intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement professionals who have worked these 10 years to protect our country and save American lives.

Thanks to the extraordinary service of these Americans, our citizens are safer and our Nation is more secure. In delivering justice to Usama bin Laden and many other Al Qaida leaders, we are closer than ever to defeating Al Qaida and its murderous network. Despite the enormous challenges that remain in Afghani-

stan, we've pushed the Taliban out of its key strongholds, Afghan security forces are growing stronger, and the Afghan people have a new chance to forge their own future. We've fought alongside Afghans and close friends and allies from dozens of nations who have joined us in common purpose. In Afghanistan and beyond, we have shown that the United States is not and never will be at war with Islam and that we are a partner with those who seek justice, dignity, and opportunity.

After a difficult decade, we are responsibly ending today's wars from a position of strength. As the rest of our troops come home from Iraq this year, we have begun to draw down our forces in Afghanistan and transition security to the Afghan people, with whom we will forge an enduring partnership. As our sons and daughters come home to their families, we will uphold our sacred trust with our 9/11 generation veterans and work to provide the care, benefits, and opportunities they deserve. And as we reflect on 10 years of war and look ahead to a future of peace, Michelle and I call upon all Americans to show our gratitude and support for our fellow citizens who risk their lives so that we can enjoy the blessings of freedom and security.

## Statement Congratulating the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Recipients

*October 7, 2011*

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the recipients of this year's Nobel Peace Prize: Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. Today's award honors three extraordinary individuals and sends a powerful message that the struggle for universal rights and human dignity can only be fulfilled with the full participation of women around the globe.

President Sirleaf has inspired the world through her journey from a prisoner to the first female President of her country. She has helped Liberia emerge from years of civil war and make great strides toward reconstruction and a democracy that values the contributions of all Liberians, including its women. As a warrior for peace, Leymah Gbowee led her fellow Liberian women as they bravely stood their ground against a brutal dictator in a nonviolent struggle to bring peace to their country and realize a full voice for Liberian women. In Yemen, Tawakkul Karman and her fellow women activists were among the first to take to the streets this year to demand their universal rights, and despite the threats and violence waged against peaceful protestors, she has remained a powerful voice for nonviolence in a country where guns outnumber people.

Each of this year's Nobel recipients have their own story, but their lives reveal a fundamental truth. Nations are ultimately more successful when all of their citizens can reach their full potential, including women. When women and girls have access to proper health care, families are healthier and communities are less subject to the ravages of disease and hunger. When women and girls have the opportunity to pursue their education and careers of their own choosing, economies are more likely to prosper. And when women assume their rightful place as equals—in the halls of government, at the negotiating table, and across civil society—governments are more effective, peaceful resolution of disputes are more lasting, and societies are more likely to meet the aspirations of all their citizens.

I commend President Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkul Karman for showing the world that the rights and voices of half of humanity cannot and will not be denied. And I reaffirm the commitment of the United States to advance the rights and role of women everywhere, in our own country and around the world.

NOTE: The statement referred to former President Charles Taylor of Liberia.

## The President's Weekly Address

*October 8, 2011*

Next week, the Senate will vote on the "American Jobs Act." It's a bill that will put more people to work and put more money in the pockets of working Americans. And it will provide our economy with the jolt that it really needs right now.

This is not the time for the usual games or political gridlock in Washington. The challenges facing financial markets around the world could have very real effects on our own economy at a time when it's already fragile. But this

jobs bill can help guard against another downturn here in America.

This isn't just my belief. This is what independent economists have said. Not just politicians, not just people in my administration, independent experts who do this for a living have said that this jobs bill will have a significant effect for our economy and middle class families all across America. But if we don't act, the opposite will be true: There will be fewer jobs and weaker growth.