

Soon our NATO mission will come to a successful end, even as we continue to support the Libyan people and people across the Arab world who seek a democratic future.

These successes are part of the larger story. After a decade of war, we're turning the page and moving forward with strength and confidence. The drawdown in Iraq allowed us to refocus on Afghanistan and achieve major victories against Al Qaida and Usama bin Laden. As we remove the last of our troops from Iraq, we're beginning to bring our troops home from Afghanistan.

To put this in perspective, when I took office, roughly 180,000 troops were deployed in these wars. By the end of this year, that number will be cut in half and an increasing number of our troops will continue to come home.

As we end these wars, we're focusing on our greatest challenge as a nation: rebuilding our economy and renewing our strength at home. Over the past decade, we spent a trillion dollars on war, borrowed heavily from overseas, and invested too little in the greatest source of our national strength, our own people. Now, the nation we need to build is our own.

We have to tackle this challenge with the same urgency and the same unity that our

troops brought to their fight. That's why we have to do everything in our power to get our economy moving again. That's why I'm calling on Congress to pass the "American Jobs Act," so we can rebuild our country—our schools, our roads, our bridges—and put our veterans, construction workers, teachers, cops, and fire-fighters back to work. And that's why I hope all of us can draw strength from the example of our men and women in uniform.

They've met their responsibilities to America. Now it's time to meet ours. It's time to come together and show the world why the United States of America remains the greatest source for freedom and opportunity that the world has ever known.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:55 p.m. on October 21 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on October 22. In the address, the President referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, former leader of Libya, who was killed near Sirte, Libya, on October 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 22.

Statement on the Death of Crown Prince Sultan bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia *October 22, 2011*

It was with great regret that I learned of the passing of Crown Prince Sultan bin Abd al-Aziz of Saudi Arabia. As Minister of Defense and Aviation for almost 50 years, Crown Prince Sultan dedicated himself to the welfare and security of his people and country and was a valued friend of the United States. He was a strong

supporter of the deep and enduring partnership between our two countries forged almost seven decades ago in the historic meeting between President Roosevelt and King Abd al-Aziz Al Saud. On behalf of the American people, I extend my deepest condolences to King Abdallah, the royal family, and the people of Saudi Arabia.

Statement on Libya's Declaration of Liberation *October 23, 2011*

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the people of Libya on today's historic declaration of liberation. After four decades of brutal dictatorship and 8 months of deadly conflict,

the Libyan people can now celebrate their freedom and the beginning of a new era of promise.

Now that the fighting in Libya has reached an end, the Transitional National

Council (TNC) must turn its attention to the political transition ahead. We look forward to working with the TNC and an empowered transitional government as they prepare for the country's first free and fair elections. The Libyan authorities should also continue living up to their commitments to respect human rights, begin a national reconciliation

process, secure weapons and dangerous materials, and bring together armed groups under a unified civilian leadership. As they take these steps, the United States will continue our close cooperation with our international partners and the U.N. Support Mission in Libya to help advance a stable, democratic transition.

Statement on the Earthquake in Turkey October 23, 2011

We have been following reports of the earthquake in Turkey's eastern province of Van with great concern. On behalf of the American people, I express my deepest condolences to the families of the victims. Our thoughts and

prayers are with the brave men and women who are working to bring assistance to this stricken region. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our Turkish ally in this difficult time and are ready to assist the Turkish authorities.

Statement on Elections in Tunisia October 23, 2011

Today, less than a year after they inspired the world, the Tunisian people took an important step forward. I congratulate the millions of Tunisians who voted in the first democratic elections to take place in the country that changed the course of history and began the Arab Spring. Just as so many Tunisian citizens protested peacefully in streets and squares to claim their rights, today they stood in lines and cast

their votes to determine their own future. Now Tunisia begins the hard work of forming an interim government, drafting a new Constitution, and charting a democratic course that meets the aspirations of all Tunisians. The United States reaffirms its commitment to the Tunisian people as they move toward a democratic future that offers dignity, justice, freedom of expression, and greater economic opportunity for all.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Las Vegas, Nevada October 24, 2011

The President. Hello, Vegas! Thank you. Thank you so much. It is good to be back in Las Vegas. It is good to be back in Nevada. I love coming to Vegas. The only people who love coming more is my staff. *[Laughter]* I would not be surprised if some of them miss the plane accidentally. *[Laughter]* But is wonderful to be with all of you.

I want to especially thank Stephen for the incredible work that he is doing right now, because as a consequence of his work, we are going to see more tourism dollars in Las Vegas, more tourism dollars in Nevada, more tourism

dollars in the United States of America. So please give him a big round of applause for all his efforts.

I see a lot of friends here, folks who have been with me for a long time. And to all of you, I just want to say thank you. But I'm here today not just because I need your help again. I am here because the country needs your help. I'm here because if you thought that the last election was critical to our future, then I can promise you that what happens in the coming year is going to be even more consequential. It's going