

Finally, I would note that this success is part of a larger story. After a difficult decade, the tide of war is receding. The long war in Iraq is finally coming to an end. With our allies and partners, including the extraordinary sacrifices of the French people, we've achieved major victories against Al Qaida, including Usama bin Laden. In Afghanistan, where French and American soldiers fight side by side, we've begun a transition so Afghans can take responsibility for their security and our troops can begin coming home.

Today, America and our allies are moving forward with confidence and with strength. And these men and women in uniform carry on a legacy that I actually can see from the windows of the White House. In one direction, there's the monument to Washington; in the other, a statue of Rochambeau, who served so well at Washington's side. And at the base of that statue are words Washington expressed to his friend after the Revolutionary War in America was won. And I've shared these words with President Sarkozy on one of our visits, so I want to conclude with them this afternoon, because they capture the spirit that we celebrate today.

Statement on the Hajj and Eid al-Adha November 5, 2011

Michelle and I extend our greetings for a happy Eid al-Adha to Muslims worldwide and congratulate those performing Hajj. Thousands of Muslim Americans are among those who have joined one of the world's largest and most diverse gatherings in making the pilgrimage to Mecca and nearby sites.

As Muslims celebrate this Eid, they will also commemorate Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son by distributing food to those less fortunate around the world. They join the

This is what Washington said to his dear friend from France: "We are fellow laborers in the cause of liberty, and we have lived together as brothers should do—in harmonious friendship."

President Sarkozy, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Armed Forces of France and the United States, for more than two centuries we have stood together in friendship, and because of our unwavering commitment to the cause of liberty, I'm confident that we'll continue to stand together, strong and free, for all the centuries to come. So *vive la France*. God bless America. And long live the alliance between our two great nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Benoit Puga, chief of staff to President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; Brig. Gen. Francois Estrate, head, France's Military Mission to the United Nations; Mayor Bernard Brochand of Cannes, France; Adm. James G. Stavridis, USN, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, USN, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and Lt. Gen. Ralph J. Jodice II, USN, commander, Allied Air Component Command Headquarters, Izmir, Turkey.

United States and the international community in relief efforts to assist those struggling to survive in the Horn of Africa and those recovering from the devastating earthquake in Turkey.

The Eid and Hajj rituals are a reminder of the shared roots of the world's Abrahamic faiths and the powerful role that faith plays in motivating communities to serve and stand with those in need. On behalf of the American people, we extend our best wishes during this Hajj season. *Eid Mubarak* and *Hajj Mabrouk*.

Remarks on Programs To Aid Veterans Seeking Employment November 7, 2011

Thank you very much, everybody. Please be seated. This week, we commemorate Veterans Day. We honor the service and the sacrifice of all who have worn the uniform of the United States of America with honor and distinction. And above all, we commit ourselves to serving them, as well as they have served us. That's why we're here today.

Today's 9/11 generation of veterans has already earned a special place in our history. Over a difficult decade, they've performed heroically in some of the world's most dangerous places. They've done everything that we've asked of them. And I'm honored to have some of these extraordinary Americans here at the White House with us this morning.

I'm also proud to be joined by some of America's leading veterans service organizations—the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America—as well as Members of Congress who have historically been extraordinarily supportive of our veterans. And we're here today to try to take some steps to better serve today's veterans in a rough economy.

Over the past decade, nearly 3 million servicemembers have transitioned back to civilian life, joining the millions who have served through the decades. And as we end the war in Iraq and we wind down the war in Afghanistan, over a million more will join them over the next 5 years. Just think about the skills these veterans have acquired, often at a very young age. Think about the leadership that they've learned, the cutting-edge technologies that they've mastered, their ability to adapt to changing and unpredictable circumstances you just can't get from a classroom. Think about how many have led others to life-and-death missions by the time they're 25 or 26 years old.

This is exactly the kind of leadership and responsibility that every American business should be competing to attract. This is the kind of talent we need to compete for the jobs and industries of the future. These are the kinds of

Americans that every company should want to hire.

And yet, while our economy has added more than 350,000 private sector jobs just over the past 3 months, more than 850,000 veterans remain unemployed. Too many can't find a job worthy of their tremendous talents. Too many military spouses have a hard time finding work after moving from base to base. And even though the overall unemployment rate ticked down last month, unemployment among veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan continued to rise. That's not right. It doesn't make sense—not for our veterans, not for our families, not for America—and we're determined to change that.

I've told the story before of a soldier in the 82d Airborne who served as a combat medic in Afghanistan, and he saved lives over there. He earned a Bronze Star for his actions. But when he returned home, he couldn't even get a job as a first-responder. He had to take classes through the post-9/11 GI bill—classes that he probably could have taught—just so he could qualify for the same duties at home that he was doing every single day at war.

You know what? If you can save a life on the battlefield, then you can save a life in an ambulance. If you can oversee a convoy or millions of dollars of assets in Iraq, you can help a business back home manage their supply chain or balance their books. If you can juggle the demands of raising a family while a loved one is at war, you can juggle the demands of almost any job in America.

We ask our men and women in uniform to leave their families and their jobs and risk their lives to fight for our country, and the last thing they should have to do is fight for a job when they come home. And that's why we're here today, to do everything in our power to see to it that America's veterans have the opportunities that they deserve and that they have earned.

Now, I've already directed the Federal Government to lead by example and to hire more veterans. And it has hired more than 120,000