

Congress, where are initiatives that we can take right now administratively that would make a difference in the communities that all of you represent. And so part of the function of this gathering is for all of you to share your best ideas, your best practices. What are things we can get implemented in the next 3 months? Where are areas where you see a potential difference being made?

I'll just give you one example. We, on our own initiative, identified the need for small businesses, who in these difficult economic times have some cash flow problems. We said, you know what, let's speed up payments to them. They've already done the work, or they're in the process of doing the work, and the Federal Government likes to sit on that money until the last day. *[Laughter]* Let's see if we can send them that check a little bit sooner so that they can put that money back to work.

And obviously, African American businesses typically are small businesses, so this is something that can benefit folks right away, and we can start seeing a difference in our communities.

I want to make sure that those are the kinds of ideas that all of you are providing to us, sharing with our Cabinet Secretaries, sharing with our staffs. And what we want to do following up on the report about what we've already done is hopefully 3 months from now, 6 months from now, we'll be able to go back and say, here's some additional steps that we took based on community input.

So I just want to—so use today as an opportunity to share ideas with us. We're going to have breakout sessions. Let's do some brain-

storming; we want your input, we want your ideas. At the end of this—the conference, I've asked Valerie Jarrett as well as Gene Sperling, who is my chief economic coordinator, the head of the National Economic Council, to come back and hear what ideas were proposed.

But the last point I want to make is this—and I made this point just recently when we were dedicating the new King Memorial—we have been through tougher times before. Our parents have been through tougher times; our grandparents have been through tougher times. We know tough times. And what we also know, though, is that if we are persistent, if we are unified, and we remain hopeful, then we'll get through these tough times and better days lie ahead.

So I just want everybody to participate here in a spirit of persistence, determination, and unity. And if you maintain that spirit, then I'm confident that not only will the American—the African American community emerge from these difficult economic times stronger than we were before, but this entire Nation is going to come out more unified, better equipped to deal with the challenges of the 21st century than we were before.

So I appreciate all of you. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Heather J. Foster, Director of African American Outreach, White House Office of Public Engagement; and Mayor Michael A. Nutter of Philadelphia, PA.

Joint Statement by President Obama and President Anibal Antonio Cavaco Silva of Portugal *November 9, 2011*

Building on the deep friendship and long-standing alliance between the United States and Portugal, we met today to reaffirm the strength of the partnership between our two countries. We acknowledged the very important role

played by the Portuguese-American community in bringing our two nations closer together. Determined to further enhance our relationship, we discussed ways of maximizing the work of the U.S.-Portugal Bilateral Commission, which

facilitates cooperation in areas as diverse as defense and security, education, science and technology exchanges, economic revitalization, law enforcement, and development in the Azores. We also noted that in recent years, partnerships between Portuguese and American universities are developing state of the art research in areas such as engineering, information technology, and medicine, and we committed to fostering these relationships in the future.

This meeting was an opportunity for exchanging views on the present world economic and financial situation. The United States underscored its full support for Portugal's implementation of its reform program backed by the IMF and the EU.

We also agreed to continue our close cooperation within the U.N. Security Council, where Portugal currently serves as Council President, on issues of mutual concern, such as Syria, Libya, Middle East peace, and Iran. We

emphasized the importance that both our countries attach to the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace, democracy, good governance and human rights.

As two of the original founding members of NATO, we reaffirmed our commitment to the Atlantic Alliance. We discussed ongoing NATO operations, in particular in Afghanistan, where Portugal intends to maintain its contribution. Recalling the success of the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, we reviewed plans for the May 2012 NATO Summit that President Obama will host in Chicago. We agreed that we would work together in the coming months to ensure that the Summit advances our joint goal of ensuring that the Alliance is fully prepared to meet the security challenges of the 21st century.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Weapons of Mass Destruction November 9, 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

with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938, as amended, is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond November 14, 2011.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
November 9, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the National Women's Law Center Awards Dinner November 9, 2011

The President. Well, good evening, everybody.
Audience members. Good evening.

The President. It is great to be back at the National Women's Law Center, surrounded by so many powerful and accomplished women. This is not a new experience for me.

[*Laughter*] Some of you know my household is filled with powerful, accomplished women.

I want to thank Marcia and Duffy for that wonderful, heartfelt introduction and for their extraordinary leadership. Most of all, I want to