

Statement on the Progress in Russia's World Trade Organization Accession Talks

November 10, 2011

I congratulate President Medvedev and his Government for completing negotiations on the terms and conditions for Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), which were adopted today by the WTO working party on Russia's accession. The outcome of today's working party meeting is the last step before WTO Ministers approve these terms and invite Russia to become a WTO member, which we expect to take place at the WTO ministerial conference on December 15–17, 2011. After nearly two decades of negotiations, Russia will now be able to join to the WTO. This is a significant day for U.S.-Russia relations and for our commitment to a growing, rules-based global economy.

Since the beginning of my administration, and with increased intensity after President Medvedev and I met in Washington in June 2010, I have supported Russia's WTO accession. Russia's membership in the WTO will lower tariffs, improve international access to Russia's services markets, hold the Russian Government accountable to a system of rules governing trade behavior, and provide the means to enforce those rules.

Russia's membership in the WTO will generate more exports for American manufacturers and farmers, which in turn will support well-paying jobs in the United States.

Russia also is opening its services market in sectors that are priorities to American companies, including audio-visual, telecommunications, financial services, computer, and retail services.

From day one of its membership in the WTO, Russia will be required to comply with WTO rules on the protection and enforcement

of intellectual property rights, including with respect to key rights relied on by U.S. creative and innovative industries.

Russia's membership in the WTO also will benefit American companies and their workers by integrating Russia into a system of rules governing legal transparency and trade behavior and providing the means to enforce those rules.

Upon Russia's accession, the United States will be able to use WTO mechanisms, including dispute settlement, to challenge Russia's actions that are inconsistent with WTO rules.

All of these benefits also apply to Russia's other WTO trading partners, including Georgia, which concluded a far-reaching agreement with Russia yesterday for monitoring trade between their two countries.

I now look forward to working with Congress to end the application of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to Russia in order to ensure that American firms and American exporters will enjoy the same benefits of Russian WTO membership as their international competitors.

Russia's WTO accession would be yet another important step forward in our reset of relations with Russia, which has been based upon the belief that the United States and Russia share many common interests, even as we disagree on some issues. Whether cooperating to supply our forces in Afghanistan, securing nuclear materials, or achieving the New START Treaty, the United States and Russia have demonstrated the ability to produce win-win outcomes on security issues. Russia's dramatic step today towards joining the WTO underscores our ability to cooperate also on economic issues of mutual interest.

Statement on the Department of State's Keystone XL Pipeline Announcement

November 10, 2011

I support the State Department's announcement today regarding the need to seek addi-

tional information about the Keystone XL Pipeline proposal. Because this permit decision

could affect the health and safety of the American people as well as the environment and because a number of concerns have been raised through a public process, we should take the time to ensure that all questions are properly addressed and all the potential impacts are properly understood. The final decision should be guided by an open, transparent process that is informed by the best available science and

the voices of the American people. At the same time, my administration will build on the unprecedented progress we've made towards strengthening our Nation's energy security, from responsibly expanding domestic oil and gas production to nearly doubling the fuel efficiency of our cars and trucks, to continued progress in the development of a clean energy economy.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation Providing Tax Credits To Aid Businesses Hiring Veterans *November 10, 2011*

Today Republicans and Democrats in the Senate did the right thing and passed tax credits that will encourage businesses to hire America's veterans. Tomorrow our Nation will commemorate Veterans Day and honor the service and the sacrifice of all who have worn the uniform of the United States of America. No veteran who fought for our Nation should have to

fight for a job when they come home, and I urge the House to pass these tax credits as well so I can sign them into law. I also urge Congress to pass additional jobs proposals in the weeks ahead to help the millions of other Americans who are still looking for work.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 674.

Remarks at a Veterans Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia *November 11, 2011*

Thank you, Ric Shinseki, for your extraordinary service to our country and your tireless commitment to our veterans; to Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta; to Chairman Dempsey and Mrs. Dempsey; to our wonderful veterans service organizations for the extraordinary work that you do for our Nation's heroes; to all who tend to and watch over this sacred cemetery; and above all, to every Active Duty member, guardsman, reservist, and veteran of the United States Armed Forces.

There are many honors and responsibilities that come with this job, but none are more humbling than serving as your Commander in Chief. And I'm proud to be with so many of you here today.

Here, where our heroes come to rest, we come to show our gratitude. A few moments ago, I laid a wreath to pay tribute to all who have given their lives to our country. For even though this is a day we rightly honor America's veterans, we gather today in solemn respect,

mindful that we are guests here, mindful that we share this hallowed space with a family's moment of quiet grief, mindful that many veterans not far from here are tracing their fingers over black granite for friends who never came home and expect us to do all we can to bring every missing American servicemember home to their families.

To all our Nation's veterans: Whether you fought in Salerno or Samarra, Khe Sanh or the Korengal, you are part of an unbroken chain of men and women who have served this country with honor and distinction. On behalf of a proud and grateful nation, we thank you.

When I spoke here on this day 2 years ago, I said there would be a day before long when this generation of service men and women would begin to step out of uniform. And I made them a promise. I said that when your tour ends, when you see our flag, when you touch our soil, you will be home in an America