

Government accountable. These significant steps expose the increasing diplomatic isolation of a regime that has systematically violated human rights and repressed peaceful protests. The United States joins with the Arab League in its support for the Syrian people, who con-

tinue to demand their universal rights in the face of the regime's callous violence. We will continue to work with our friends and allies to pressure the Asad regime and support the Syrian people as they pursue the dignity and transition to democracy that they deserve.

Remarks at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit Dinner in Honolulu November 12, 2011

Aloha. On behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to Hawaii, and on behalf of the American people, welcome to the United States.

We have a busy day ahead of us tomorrow, and we have a luau tonight, including hula dancing, so I want to be brief. [*Laughter*]

We are 21 leaders from across the Asia-Pacific. We represent close to 3 billion people, from different continents and cultures, north, south, east, and west, men and women of every faith, color, and creed.

Yet whatever our differences, our citizens have sent us here with a common task: to bring our economies closer together, to cooperate, to create jobs and prosperity that our people deserve so that they can provide for their families, so that they can give their children a better future.

And so it was America's turn to host APEC, and I could not imagine a more fitting place than my home State of Hawaii. Here, we are literally in the center of the Pacific. Here, we're reminded of the progress that's possible when people of different backgrounds and beliefs come together. This is the most diverse State in our Nation, home to so many races and

immigrants and Americans who trace their roots back to many of your countries.

Hawaii is not perfect, but I think Hawaii comes about as close as you'll come to a true melting pot of cultures, where people live and work together in mutual trust and mutual respect.

Here, we're a single *ohana*—one family. We remember that beneath the surface, behind all the different languages and some very long names, we all share the same hopes, the same struggles, and the same aspirations. And we've learned that we're more likely to realize our aspirations when we pursue them together.

That's the spirit of Hawaii. It's what made me who I am. It's what shapes my interactions with all of you. And it's the spirit that I hope guides us in our work this weekend.

And so I'd like to propose a toast with the words of a traditional Hawaiian proverb: '*A'oha hana nui ke alu 'ia*. And that means: No task is too big when done together by all.

Cheers. *Salud*. Everybody enjoy the evening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:43 p.m. at the Hale Koa Hotel.

Remarks at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit Reception and Cultural Performance in Honolulu November 12, 2011

The President. Good evening, everybody. To all the leaders who are representing their countries here at APEC, I hope you've had a wonderful stay so far and hope you had a wonderful dinner. To members of the delegation, welcome.

Two years ago, when I was in Singapore and it was announced that we would be hosting the APEC summit here in Honolulu, I promised that you would all have to wear aloha shirts or grass skirts. [*Laughter*] But I was persuaded by our team to perhaps break tradition, and so we

have not required you to wear your aloha shirts, although I understand that a few of you have tried them on for size, and we may yet see you in them in the next several days.

But one tradition that we did not want to break is the tradition of the luau. Here in Hawaii, there is a traditional gathering that we call luau, and it's basically an excuse for a good party, and it's used for every occasion. We have birthday luaus and graduation luaus. And now we have APEC luaus. And there is——

Audience member. Whoo!

The President. See? Somebody's ready to party already. *[Laughter]*

We have music. We have song. We have celebration. And we have hula dancing. And Michelle does not think I'm a very good dancer, so I will not be performing this evening.

[Laughter] But I think we will have some wonderful examples of traditional Polynesian dance and music and song. And it will capture, I think, the extraordinary spirit of these islands, but also capture, I think, the spirit in which I hope we proceed in our important work during the course of this APEC summit.

We are bound together by an ocean. We are bound together by a common belief and a common concern for our people, their aspirations, their hopes, their dreams. And so I hope that all of you feel the extraordinary spirit of Hawaii and very much look forward to a wonderful set of meetings tomorrow.

So with that, please enjoy.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 p.m. at the Hale Koa Hotel.

Remarks at an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit Working Session in Kapolei, Hawaii November 13, 2011

Good morning, everybody. It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you, officially, to the APEC leaders meeting. This is the first time in nearly 20 years that the United States has hosted this forum, and it comes at a time when America is very focused on how we can work together in a cooperative, effective way in the transpacific region.

And obviously, I'm particularly pleased that we're meeting in my home State of Hawaii, which reflects the deep connections between the peoples of our region. And I hope everybody had a wonderful evening last night. I've heard that some of you wanted to join in the hula dancing. *[Laughter]* I'm sorry we did not give you that opportunity.

Now it's time to get down to work, and we have much to do. Our 21 economies, our nearly 3 billion citizens, are looking to us to bring our economies closer, to increase exports, to expand trade and opportunity that creates jobs and economic growth. That's why we're here.

I'm confident that we can make significant progress. We've done it before. Since APEC started, we've slashed tariffs and barriers to

trade and investment. Commerce in the region has soared, creating new jobs, new markets, and raising living standards across the region.

And I want to emphasize that the Asia-Pacific region is absolutely critical to America's economic growth. We consider it a top priority. And we consider it a top priority because we're not going to be able to put our folks back to work and grow our economy and expand opportunity unless the Asia-Pacific region is also successful.

This region includes many of our top trading partners. This is where we do most of our trade and where we sell most of our exports. It's also the fastest growing region in the world. And as a consequence, the Asia-Pacific region is key to achieving my goal of doubling U.S. exports and creating new jobs.

Today we've got an opportunity to make progress towards our ultimate goal, which is a seamless regional economy. We're going to be focusing on three specific areas: increasing trade and investment, promoting green jobs, and streamlining and coordinating regulations so that we encourage trade and job creation.