

## Statement on Representative Barney Frank's Decision Not To Seek Reelection *November 28, 2011*

This country has never had a Congressman like Barney Frank, and the House of Representatives will not be the same without him. For over 30 years, Barney has been a fierce advocate for the people of Massachusetts and Americans everywhere who needed a voice. He has worked tirelessly on behalf of families and businesses and helped make housing more affordable. He has stood up for the rights of LGBT Americans and fought to end discrimi-

nation against them. And it is only thanks to his leadership that we were able to pass the most sweeping financial reform in history designed to protect consumers and prevent the kind of excessive risk-taking that led to the financial crisis from ever happening again. Barney's passion and his quick wit will be missed in the halls of Congress, and Michelle and I join the people of the Bay State in thanking him for his years of service.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands *November 29, 2011*

*President Obama.* Hello, everybody. It is wonderful to welcome Prime Minister Rutte and his delegation to the White House.

Part of the reason we wanted to make this meeting happen is because we have no stronger ally than the Netherlands. They consistently punch above their weight on a whole range of issues related to global security. Prime Minister Rutte has been a strong supporter of NATO, as was his predecessor, and we've been able to work together on a whole host of issues. They've made an enormous contribution to Afghanistan; they made a very important contribution to Libya, on anti-piracy. On a whole host of issues, the Netherlands consistently is supportive of efforts for our joint security, and we're very grateful for that.

In addition, despite the fact that the Netherlands doesn't have a huge population, they are one of our most important trading partners. The economic relationship between our two countries is deep; it is broad. We are one of the largest investors in the Netherlands. The Netherlands in turn is one of the largest investors in the United States. And so given both of our interests in promoting commerce, growth, and jobs, it is very important that we coordinate with the Netherlands.

On that score, obviously, we're both concerned about the situation in the euro zone, in

which the Netherlands has a very significant voice. And I'm going to be interested in hearing from Mark his views in terms of how this issue gets resolved. Because, as I said yesterday during my meeting with Presidents Van Rompuy and Barroso, we have a very deep interest here in the United States in making sure that that process is resolved so that we can continue to grow our economy and put people back to work here at home.

In addition, we're going to be talking about a wide range of global issues, from the Middle East to the situation in Iran, where we both share a deep commitment to making sure that Iran abides by its international obligations, including in the nuclear area.

On that score, I think it's important for me to just note that all of us, I think, are deeply disturbed by the crashing of the English Embassy—the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Iran. That kind of behavior is not acceptable. And I strongly urge the Iranian Government to hold those who are responsible to task. They have a responsibility to protect diplomatic outposts. That is a basic international obligation that all countries need to observe. And for rioters, essentially, to be able to overrun the Embassy and set it on fire is an indication that the Iranian Government is not taking its international obligations seriously.