

desire to lift millions of Ethiopians out of poverty through his drive for food security. I am also grateful for Prime Minister Meles's service for peace and security in Africa, his contributions to the African Union, and his voice for Africa on the world stage.

On behalf of the American people, I offer my condolences to Prime Minister Meles's

family and to the people of Ethiopia on this untimely loss and confirm the U.S. Government's commitment to our partnership with Ethiopia. Going forward, we encourage the Government of Ethiopia to enhance its support for development, democracy, regional stability and security, human rights, and prosperity for its people.

Statement on the Resignation of Aaron S. Williams as Director of the Peace Corps

August 21, 2012

From working tirelessly to improve volunteer support to his leadership in reforming and modernizing the agency, Aaron has been a champion of the thousands of remarkable Peace Corps volunteers serving across the globe. I know the positive change that Peace

Corps volunteers make, and under Aaron's leadership, the agency's work has been at the forefront of this administration's efforts to increase global engagement. I want to extend my thanks to him for his dedicated service and wish him and his family the best.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Plan for Pay Increases for Civilian Federal Employees

August 21, 2012

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems for 2013.

Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees have already made significant sacrifices as a result of a two-year pay freeze. As our country continues to recover from serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare, however, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This is an effort that continues to require tough choices and each of us to do our fair share.

Accordingly, I have determined that it is appropriate to exercise my statutory alternative plan authority under 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) and 5304a to set alternative 2013 across-the-board and locality pay adjustments. Specifically, I have determined that for 2013, across-the-board pay increases will be 0.5 percent, and the current locality pay percentages shown in Schedule 9 of Executive Order 13594 of December 19, 2011, will remain at their 2012 levels. This decision will not materially affect the Federal Government's ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

Finally, with respect to the anticipated continuing resolution, Congress should maintain current pay rates during the period of the continuing resolution. Assuming such a continuing resolution is enacted, the adjustments described above would take effect after the continuing resolution expires.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA