

And particularly, when we're poised to grow rapidly as housing comes back and we're starting to see real signs of the recovery taking root, it's the wrong prescription. But ultimately, I don't need to persuade world leaders of that. They know that. I've got to persuade Members of Congress, and that can be harder sometimes.

Q. Even if you think a deal—or even if you think averting the cuts is not inevitable, do you see any realistic sign of being able to reach a deal over the next week?

President Obama. Hope springs eternal. And I will just keep on making my case not only to Congress, but more importantly, the American people to take a smart approach to deficit reduction and do it in a way that doesn't endanger our economy and endanger jobs.

I just realized I didn't have a translation of that. It was sort of a domestic question. My suggestion would be, why don't we just go ahead and direct the next question to Prime Minister Abe. That one will be translated.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to ask what you discussed with President Obama about actions by North Korea, such as the launching of missiles and a nuclear test. And also, the provocative actions that China is taking vis-a-vis the Senkaku Islands. And also, on what actions and measures you have discussed to strengthen the alliance between Japan and the United States at a time when the security environment in the region is deteriorating. What kind of concrete measures did you discuss with the President to strengthen our alliance?

Prime Minister Abe. On North Korea, the important thing we discussed, we agreed that it

was important for Japan and the United States to not provide rewards to North Korea for their actions such as launching missiles and conducting nuclear tests. That's number one.

And number two, we agreed that we would cooperate so that a resolution, including sanctions, would be adopted in the U.N. We also discussed additional sanctions, for example, financial sanctions, and we agreed to continue cooperating in that regard as well.

And then, we also talked about the importance of cooperating with other countries, especially Japan, the U.S., and Korea, in dealing with the issue of North Korea.

Concerning the South China Sea and the Senkaku Islands, we agree that the very existence of the Japan-U.S. alliance is a stabilizing factor, which contributes to the peace and stability of the region. We agreed that we would stay in close coordination with each other in dealing with such issues and other issues and a wide range of issues that we are faced with in this region. So we will continue to coordinate in dealing with such issues based on the Japan-U.S. alliance.

And I also explained that we have always been dealing with this issue, the Senkaku issue, in a calm manner. We will continue to do so and we have always done so.

President Obama. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Abe and a reporter spoke in Japanese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan February 22, 2013

The two Governments confirm that should Japan participate in the TPP negotiations, all goods would be subject to negotiation, and Japan would join others in achieving a comprehensive, high-standard agreement, as described in the Outlines of the TPP Agreement announced by TPP Leaders on November 12, 2011.

Recognizing that both countries have bilateral trade sensitivities, such as certain agricultural products for Japan and certain manufactured products for the United States, the two Governments confirm that, as the final outcome will be determined during the negotiations, it is not required to make a prior com-

mitment to unilaterally eliminate all tariffs upon joining the TPP negotiations.

The two Governments will continue their bilateral consultations with respect to Japan's possible interest in joining the TPP. While progress has been made in these consultations, more work remains to be done, including addressing

outstanding concerns with respect to the automotive and insurance sectors, addressing other non-tariff measures, and completing work regarding meeting the high TPP standards.

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to Niger

February 22, 2013

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

On February 20, 2013, the last elements of a deployment of approximately 40 additional U.S. military personnel entered Niger with the consent of the Government of Niger. This deployment will provide support for intelligence collection and will also facilitate intelligence sharing with French forces conducting operations in Mali, and with other partners in the region. The total number of U.S. military personnel deployed to Niger is approximately 100. The recently deployed forces have deployed with weapons for the purpose of providing their own force protection and security.

I directed this deployment of U.S. forces in furtherance of U.S. national security interests,

and pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Patrick J. Leahy, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 22, 2013

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days 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 the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared on March 1, 1996, with respect to the Government of Cuba's

destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2013.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.