

people of Iran that they are a great civilization; they have an extraordinary history; they have unbelievable talent. They should be fully integrated into the international community, where they can thrive and build businesses and expand commerce. And there should be exchanges and travel and interactions with the Iranian people and everyone else, including the United States. That should be the vision, not threats to raze Israeli cities to the ground.

Part of the frustration that I think we all feel sometimes is that it seems as if people spend all their time organizing around how they can gain advantage over other people or inflict violence on other people or isolate other people, instead of trying to figure out how do we solve problems. This is a solvable problem if in fact Iran is not pursuing a nuclear weapon.

And so we're going to continue to apply the pressure that we have, in a nonmilitary way, to try to resolve the problem. We will continue to try to pursue diplomatic solutions to the situation.

But yes, I have said as President of the United States that I will maintain every option that's available to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon because I think the consequences for the region and for the world would be extraordinarily dangerous.

I—my hope and expectation is, is that, among a menu of options, the option that involves negotiations, discussions, compromise, and resolution of the problem is the one that's

exercised. But as President of the United States, I would never take any option off the table.

King Abdullah. There's very little that I would like to add to what the President said. I think, looking from the Jordanian point of view and the challenges that Jordan faces as we look around the region—the challenges of what the Israelis and the Palestinians that we'll be facing in 2012, the instability as you're seeing in Syria, we have the concerns as to what's happening in Iraq—any military action at the moment, whether Israeli or Iranian, to me at this stage is Pandora's box, because nobody can guarantee what the outcome will be.

So, hopefully, there is another way of resolving this problem. At a time with so much instability in the Middle East, we just don't need another thing on our shoulders.

Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you to the people of Jordan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:23 p.m. at the Royal Al Hummar Offices. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey; and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei of Iran.

The President's Weekly Address

March 23, 2013

It has now been 3 months since the tragic events in Newtown, Connecticut: 3 months since we lost 20 innocent children and 6 dedicated adults who had so much left to give; 3 months since we, as Americans, began asking ourselves if we're really doing enough to protect our communities and keep our children safe.

For the families who lost a loved one on that terrible day, 3 months doesn't even begin to ease the pain they're feeling right now. It doesn't come close to mending the wounds that may never fully heal.

But as a nation, the last 3 months have changed us. They forced us to answer some difficult questions about what we can do—what we must do—to prevent the kinds of massacres we've seen in Newtown and Aurora and Oak Creek, as well as the everyday tragedies that happen far too often in big cities and small towns all across America.

Today, there's still genuine disagreement among well-meaning people about what steps we should take to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in this country. But you, the American

people, have spoken. You've made it clear that it's time to do something. And over the last few weeks, Senators here in Washington have listened and taken some big steps forward.

Two weeks ago, the Senate advanced a bill that would make it harder for criminals and people with a severe mental illness from getting their hands on a gun, an idea supported by 9 out of 10 Americans, including a majority of gun owners. The Senate also made progress on a bill that would crack down on anyone who buys a gun as part of a scheme to funnel it to criminals, reducing violent crime and protecting our law enforcement officers. Finally, the Senate took steps to reinstate and strengthen a ban on the sale of military-style assault weapons, set a 10-round limit for magazines, and make our schools safer places for kids to learn and grow.

These ideas shouldn't be controversial. They're common sense. They're supported by a majority of the American people. And I urge the Senate and the House to give each of them a vote.

As I've said before, we may not be able to prevent every act of violence in this country. But together, we have an obligation to try. We have an obligation to do what we can.

Right now we have a real chance to reduce gun violence in America and prevent the very worst violence. We have a unique opportunity to reaffirm our tradition of responsible gun ownership and also do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals or people with a severe mental illness.

We've made progress over the last 3 months, but we're not there yet. And in the weeks ahead, I hope Members of Congress will join me in finishing the job: for our communities and, most importantly, for our kids. Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:05 p.m. on March 19 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 22, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 23.

Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Signing of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

March 23, 2013

Three years ago today, I signed into law the principle that in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one should go broke just because they get sick. The Affordable Care Act will give hard-working, middle class families the health care security they deserve and protect every American from the worst insurance company abuses. Already, millions of seniors are saving \$600 a year on their prescription drugs. Millions of young people have been able to stay on their family's health plan until age 26. Preventive care, like mammograms for women and wellness visits for seniors, is covered free of charge. Most importantly, for the sake of our fiscal future, the growth of health care costs is beginning to slow. In fact, last year, Medicaid costs fell for the first time in decades.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies will no longer have unchecked

power to cancel your policy, deny you coverage, or charge women more than men. And soon, no American will ever again be denied care or charged more due to a preexisting condition like cancer or even asthma.

Later this year, millions of Americans will finally have the opportunity to buy the same kind of health care Members of Congress give themselves. Beginning in October, you'll be able to sign up for new private health care plans through a new health insurance marketplace where private plans will compete to save middle class families money. Through these marketplaces, Americans and small-business owners will be able to choose from a menu of health plans that fit their budget and provide quality coverage they can count on when they need it most. If you like the plan you have, you can keep it. If you cannot afford a plan, you or