

both our countries, especially the situation in Syria. We also addressed issues concerning our mutual military relationship, which is good, as you know, and also exchanges in education. As you know, there are several universities, American universities that opened branches in Qatar.

We also discussed our economic relationship. There are joint oil and gas projects between the two countries.

We also talked about the serious changes that are affecting the Middle East, especially countries like Egypt, which we consider to be a very important country and also important for peace with Israel. And for Qatar, it's very important for us to see peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and to see also a good relationship between Arab countries and Israel once a Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement is reached.

[*Amir Hamad spoke in English as follows.*]

Amir Hamad. Actually, she meant by “gas and oil” that we will talk with the President, but it's with a relation between us and Americans, with big American companies like Exxon-Mobil, et cetera. They are enjoying working with us in the sector of the hydrocarbon.

The other thing, it's the Syrian issue. As you know—

[*Amir Hamad spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were then translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Interpreter. We also discussed the Syrian issue. What's happening in Syria is a major, horrific tragedy in the region and the world. And we hope to find a solution for the bloodshed in Syria and for this current Government to leave power so that—to give room to others to take over. And we hope that any party that succeeds the current regime would be supportive of democracy and the political process.

[*Amir Hamad continued in Arabic, and his remarks were then translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Interpreter. We in Qatar support the peace process and finding a political peace, and Qatar supports that.

And we once again would like to thank the President.

[*Amir Hamad spoke in English as follows.*]

Amir Hamad. Thank you very much.

President Obama. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:28 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority.

Statement on Senator Max S. Baucus's Decision Not To Seek Reelection April 23, 2013

I want to thank Max Baucus for his nearly 35 years of service to the people of Montana. Max has made small businesses a top priority, often taking “Work Days” to visit local businesses across Montana and spend a day working alongside his constituents to gain perspective and help bolster the local economy. As Finance Committee Chairman

and a senior member of both the Agriculture and the Environment and Public Works Committees, Max has been a leader on a broad range of issues that touch the lives of Americans across the country. Michelle and I commend Senator Baucus on his career and wish him and his family well in the future.