

increasing concern about weapons coming into Iraq from Syria for use against the Iraqi people, emphasizing the need to take increasing measures to police its borders and airspace against the transit of weapons or cargo proscribed by applicable U.N. Security Council Resolutions, and called on all neighboring states to cooperate fully.

Trade

The Iraqi delegation stressed their desire to harness the U.S. private sector to advance mutual interests in Iraq and the United States. The delegations noted the signing earlier this year of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, which will help increase American exports to Iraq and provide more economic opportunities for the Iraqi people. Both delegations welcomed the steady increase in U.S. companies doing business in Iraq—including major corporations such as Citibank, Ford, General Electric, and Boeing. The Iraqi delegation expressed hope that U.S. businesses can have a prominent role in their country's rapidly developing energy, transportation, banking, and health sectors. In this regard, both delegations looked forward to mutual trade events to be held over the coming months.

Education and Exchange Programs

The Iraqi delegation discussed their vision to strengthen their nation through education and exchange programs with an emerging gen-

eration. They noted that twenty-five percent of their population—nearly 8 million Iraqis—was born after 2003, and that the Government of Iraq is determined to give this generation educational opportunities inside Iraq and abroad, including at American colleges and universities. Both delegations agreed that the best way to honor our shared sacrifice over the past decade is to provide these young Iraqis with opportunities never enjoyed by other generations. The U.S. delegation noted that under the SFA and the educational programs established through bilateral Joint Coordinating Committees, the number of Iraqi students studying in the United States has grown to nearly 1,000—and that a university fair last month in Baghdad attracted 30 U.S. universities and 2,000 Iraqi scholarship students.

Conclusion

The two delegations closed the meeting with a shared commitment to increase the numbers of Iraqis studying in the United States, in addition to strengthening other institutional ties beyond government-to-government ties, to include cultural, artistic, and scientific exchanges. Both sides again reflected on the sacrifice that has made this progress possible, while recognizing the very serious challenges that must be confronted together.

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

Statement on the Observance of Diwali November 1, 2013

For the Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists celebrating Diwali this weekend, the festival of lights reaffirms the things in life that matter most. Dancing, celebration, and good food remind us that life's greatest joys are the simple pleasures that come from spending time with people we love. Contemplation and prayer remind us that that people of all faiths have an obligation to perform *seva*, or service to others. And the flame of the *diya*, or lamp, re-

minds us that light will ultimately triumph over darkness. Here in the United States, Diwali also reminds us that our Nation is home to many faiths and traditions, and that our diversity makes us stronger, which is why I'm proud that this year Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined together for the first ever celebration of Diwali on Capitol Hill. Over the last 5 years, Michelle and I have been honored to have the chance to observe

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this ancient holiday both at the White House and in India, and we wish all those celebrating

this weekend a happy Diwali and *Saal Mubarak*.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request November 1, 2013

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

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's fiscal year (FY) 2014 Budget and Financial Plan. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed FY 2014 Budget and Financial Plan reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For FY 2014, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$12.2 billion.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

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

The President's Weekly Address November 2, 2013

Hi, everybody. On Thursday, I addressed a conference for business leaders from around the world. And my pitch was simple: Choose America, invest in America, create jobs in America. It speaks to my top priority as President: growing our economy, creating good jobs, strengthening security and opportunity for the middle class.

Over the past 3½ years, our businesses have created over 7½ million new jobs. And this week, the Treasury confirmed that since I took office, we've cut our deficits by more than half. But we have more work to do. We need to grow and create more good jobs faster. That's my driving focus. And I'll go anywhere and do anything to make it happen.

That has to be Washington's driving focus as well. But I know that what you often hear out of Washington can sound like Charlie Brown's teacher: a jumble of unfocused noise that's out of touch with the things you care about. So today I want to cut through that noise and talk plainly about what we should do right now to keep growing this economy and creating new jobs.

It begins by ending what has done more than anything else to undermine our economy over the past few years, and that's the constant cycle of manufactured crises and self-inflicted wounds. I was glad to hear the Republican leader in the Senate say this week that they won't pursue another Government shutdown or threaten another default on our debt. Because we shouldn't be injuring ourselves every few months, we should be investing in ourselves.

And one way to do that is through the budget that Congress started working on this week. Now, budgets can be a boring topic, especially on the weekend. But they can also be revealing because they expose what our priorities are as a country for everybody to see.

Think about it. We can keep wasteful corporate tax giveaways that working folks don't get, or we could close those loopholes and use that money to pay for things that actually create jobs. We can keep harmful cuts to education programs or we could give more kids a Head Start, hire more teachers in math and science and help more kids afford a college education. We can keep doling out corporate welfare to