

based on the existing Free Trade Agreement. The two Heads of State were pleased to note their common assessment of the critical role of human and economic development in promoting stability and security on the African continent, and committed to explore in greater detail concrete options for pragmatic, inclusive cooperation around economic and development issues of mutual interest.

#### *Middle East Peace*

His Majesty commended the continuous commitment of the President and the efforts of the Secretary of State to advance Middle East peace. The President acknowledged the contribution of His Majesty, Chairman of the Al Quds committee, to the efforts aiming to achieve a two state solution.

#### *Conclusion*

The President and His Majesty the King closed the meeting by emphasizing their shared

commitment to the special and longstanding relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of Morocco, which in 1777 became the first nation to recognize the independence of the United States. President Obama and King Mohammed VI reaffirmed their commitment to stay in close contact and to continue on a path of increased cooperation that will strengthen the United States-Morocco strategic partnership, including the next meeting of the U.S.-Morocco Strategic Dialogue in Rabat. They each intend to designate a senior official to lead the implementation of the commitments made today, and the President thanked His Majesty the King for his invitation to visit Morocco. Today's meeting demonstrates that the interests of the United States and Morocco continue to converge, and that this historic partnership, which began in the 18th century, continues to thrive well into the 21st century.

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

## The President's Weekly Address *November 23, 2013*

Hi, everybody. Over the past couple of months, most of the political headlines you've read have probably been about the Government shutdown and the launch of the Affordable Care Act. And I know that many of you have rightly never been more frustrated with Washington. But if you look beyond those headlines, there are some good things happening in our economy. And that's been my top priority since the day I walked into the Oval Office.

After decades in which the middle class was working harder and harder just to keep up, and a punishing recession that made it worse, we made the tough choices required not just to recover from the crisis, but to rebuild on a new foundation for stronger, more durable economic growth. Five years later, we've fought our way back. Our businesses have created 7.8 million new jobs in the past 44 months. Another 200,000 Americans went back to work last

month. The American auto industry has come roaring back with more than 350,000 new jobs, jobs churning out and selling the high-tech, fuel-efficient cars the world wants to buy. And they're leading the charge in a manufacturing sector that has added jobs for the first time since the 1990s, a big reason why our businesses sell more goods and services made in America than ever before.

We decided to reverse our addiction to foreign oil. And today, we generate more renewable energy than ever, more natural gas than anybody, and for the first time in nearly 20 years, America now produces more oil than we buy from other countries.

We decided to fix a broken health care system. And even though the rollout of the marketplace where you can buy affordable plans has been rough, so far about 500,000 Americans are poised to gain health coverage starting

January 1. And by the way, health care costs are growing at the slowest rate in 50 years.

One more thing: Since I took office, we've cut our deficits by more than half. And that makes it easier to invest in the things that create jobs: education, research, and infrastructure.

Imagine how much farther along we could be if both parties were working together. Think about what we could do if a reckless few didn't hold the economy hostage every few months or waste time on dozens of votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act rather than try to help us fix it.

In the weeks ahead, I'll keep talking about my plan to build a better bargain for the middle class: good jobs; a good education; a chance to buy a home, save, and retire; and yes, the financial security of affordable health care. And

I'll look for any willing partners who want to help.

Because of your hard work and tough sacrifices over the past 5 years, we're pointed in the right direction. But we've got more work to do to keep moving that way. And as long as I'm President, I'll keep doing everything I can to create jobs, grow the economy, and make sure that everyone who works hard has a chance to get ahead.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:20 p.m. on November 22 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on November 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 22, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 23.

## Remarks on Iran November 23, 2013

Good evening. Today the United States, together with our close allies and partners, took an important first step toward a comprehensive solution that addresses our concerns with the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear program.

Since I took office, I've made clear my determination to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. As I've said many times, my strong preference is to resolve this issue peacefully, and we've extended the hand of diplomacy. Yet, for many years, Iran has been unwilling to meet its obligations to the international community. So my administration worked with Congress, the United Nations Security Council, and countries around the world to impose unprecedented sanctions on the Iranian Government.

These sanctions have had a substantial impact on the Iranian economy, and with the election of a new Iranian President earlier this year, an opening for diplomacy emerged. I spoke personally with President Rouhani of Iran earlier this fall. Secretary Kerry has met multiple times with Iran's Foreign Minister. And we have pursued intensive diplomacy, bilaterally with the Iranians and together with

our P-5-plus-1 partners: the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China, as well as the European Union.

Today that diplomacy opened up a new path toward a world that is more secure, a future in which we can verify that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful and that it cannot build a nuclear weapon. While today's announcement is just a first step, it achieves a great deal. For the first time in nearly a decade, we have halted the progress of the Iranian nuclear program, and key parts of the program will be rolled back. Iran has committed to halting certain levels of enrichment and neutralizing part of its stockpiles. Iran cannot use its next-generation centrifuges, which are used for enriching uranium. Iran cannot install or start up new centrifuges, and its production of centrifuges will be limited. Iran will halt work at its plutonium reactor. And new inspections will provide extensive access to Iran's nuclear facilities and allow the international community to verify whether Iran is keeping its commitments.

These are substantial limitations, which will help prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon. Simply put, they cut off Iran's most