

Guantanamo Bay Detainees

President Obama reaffirmed his commitment to closing the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. He noted his decision to lift the moratorium on detainee transfers to Yemen, and the two Presidents agreed their governments would work together to facilitate the repatriation of Yemeni detainees who have been designated for transfer. President Hadi af-

firmed his intention to establish an extremist rehabilitation program to address the problem of violent extremism within Yemen, which could also facilitate the transfer of Yemeni detainees held at Guantanamo. Presidents Obama and Hadi agreed to remain in close consultation on this critical matter.

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

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Samantha Power as United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations

August 1, 2013

I'm pleased that the Senate has confirmed Samantha Power as our next U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations by a strong bipartisan majority. As one of our country's leading foreign policy thinkers, Samantha knows that our Nation's interests are advanced with strong and principled American leadership. As a long-time champion of human rights and dignity,

she will be a fierce advocate for universal rights, fundamental freedoms, and U.S. national interests. I'm grateful that Samantha will continue to be a vital member of my national security team, and I know that under her leadership, our U.N. Mission in New York will continue to represent American diplomacy at its best.

The President's Weekly Address

August 3, 2013

Hi, everybody. This week, I went down to an Amazon warehouse in Tennessee to talk more about what we need to do to secure a better bargain for the middle class, to make sure that anyone who works hard can get ahead in the 21st-century economy.

Over the past 4½ years, we've fought our way back from the worst recession of our lifetimes and begun to lay a foundation for stronger, more durable economic growth. Today, our businesses have created 7.3 million new jobs over the last 41 months. We now sell more products made in America to the rest of the world than ever before. Health care costs are growing at the slowest rate in 50 years, and our deficits are falling at the fastest rate in 60 years.

But as any middle class family will tell you, we're not where we need to be yet. Even before this crisis hit, we were living through a decade where a few at the top were doing better

and better, while most families were working harder and harder just to get by.

Reversing this trend must be Washington's highest priority. It sure is mine. But too often over the past 2 years, Washington has taken its eye off the ball. They've allowed an endless parade of political posturing and phony scandals to distract from growing our economy and strengthening the middle class.

That's why I'm laying out my ideas for how we can build on the cornerstones of what it means to be middle class in America: a good education; a home of your own; health care when you get sick; a secure retirement even if you're not rich; and the most important cornerstone of all, a good job in a durable, growing industry.

When it comes to creating more good jobs that pay decent wages, the problem is not a lack of ideas. Plenty of independent economists, business owners, and people from both

parties agree on what we have to do. I proposed many of these ideas 2 years ago in the “American Jobs Act.” And this week, I put forward commonsense proposals for how we can create more jobs in manufacturing; in wind, solar, and natural gas; and by rebuilding America’s infrastructure.

What we’re lacking is action from Washington. And that’s why, in addition to proposing ideas that we know will grow our economy, I also put forward a strategy for breaking through the Washington logjam: a grand bargain for the middle class.

I’m willing to work with Republicans to simplify our Tax Code for businesses large and small, but only if we take the money we save by transitioning to a simpler tax system and make a significant investment in creating good, middle class jobs. We can put construction workers back on the job rebuilding our infrastructure. We can boost manufacturing so more American companies can sell their products around the world. And we can help our community colleges arm our workers with the skills they need in a global economy, all without adding a dime to the deficit.

I’ll keep laying out my ideas to give the middle class a better shot in the 21st century, and

I’ll keep reaching out to Republicans for theirs. But gutting critical investments in our future and threatening a national default on the bills that Congress has already racked up, that’s not an economic plan. Denying health care to millions of Americans or shutting down the Government just because I’m for keeping it open, that won’t help the middle class.

The truth is, there are no gimmicks when it comes to creating jobs. There are no tricks to grow the economy. Reversing the long erosion of middle class security in this country won’t be easy. But if we work together and take a few bold steps, and if Washington is willing to set aside politics and focus on what really matters, we can grow our economy and give the middle class a better bargain. And together, we can make this country a place where everyone who works hard can get ahead.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 1:05 p.m. on August 2 in the Grand Foyer at the White House for broadcast on August 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 2, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 3.

Remarks at Desert Vista High School in Phoenix, Arizona August 6, 2013

The President. Hey! Hello, Phoenix! Hello, Arizona! It is—

Audience member. We love you, Obama!

The President. I love you back. It is good to be here.

I want to say thank you to the Thunder for hosting us here today. Well, we are so glad to be here. I want you to give it up for somebody who’s been fighting for homeowners and working families every single day, who’s with me today: Secretary Shaun Donovan, Secretary of HUD. There he is right there. Give him a big round of applause. We’ve got Congressman Ed Pastor who’s here as well. We’ve got your mayor, Greg Stanton, here. Doing an outstanding job. And to all the mayors and State legislators

and tribal leaders who are here today, thank you.

Give Jorge a big round of applause for his introduction. To your superintendent, Dr. Kenneth Baca; your principal, Dr. Anna Battle. And I appreciate everybody at Desert Vista for having me here today. It is good to see the students are pretty enthusiastic about being back in school. [*Laughter*] I’m not sure I would have been that enthusiastic starting on the 6th. [*Laughter*] And I know this isn’t your typical school—second day of school. So I want to give a special shout-out to the new seniors, class of 2014. You are aware that you’re not finished yet, so—[*laughter*]. I—senior year, that’s sometimes tempting. I want you all to stay focused.