

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:15 a.m. on February 28 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March

1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 28, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 1.

## Joint Statement by Group of Seven Leaders on the Situation in Ukraine March 2, 2014

We, the leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States and the President of the European Council and President of the European Commission, join together today to condemn the Russian Federation's clear violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in contravention of Russia's obligations under the UN Charter and its 1997 basing agreement with Ukraine. We call on Russia to address any ongoing security or human rights concerns that it has with Ukraine through direct negotiations, and/or via international observation or mediation under the auspices of the UN or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We stand ready to assist with these efforts.

We also call on all parties concerned to behave with the greatest extent of self-restraint and responsibility, and to decrease the tensions.

We note that Russia's actions in Ukraine also contravene the principles and values on

which the G-7 and the G-8 operate. As such, we have decided for the time being to suspend our participation in activities associated with the preparation of the scheduled G-8 Summit in Sochi in June, until the environment comes back where the G-8 is able to have meaningful discussion.

We are united in supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and its right to choose its own future. We commit ourselves to support Ukraine in its efforts to restore unity, stability, and political and economic health to the country. To that end, we will support Ukraine's work with the International Monetary Fund to negotiate a new program and to implement needed reforms. IMF support will be critical in unlocking additional assistance from the World Bank, other international financial institutions, the EU, and bilateral sources.

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

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters March 3, 2014

*President Obama.* Well, it's a pleasure to welcome once again Prime Minister Netanyahu to the Oval Office. There's nobody I've met with more or consulted with more than Bibi. And it's a testimony to the incredible bond between our two nations. I've said before, and I will repeat: We do not have a closer friend or ally than Israel, and the bond between our two countries and our two peoples is unbreakable.

And that's the reason why on a whole spectrum of issues, we consult closely; we have the kind of military and intelligence and security cooperation that is unprecedented. And there

is a strong bipartisan commitment in this country to make sure that Israel's security is preserved in any contingency.

We're going to have a wide range of issues obviously to discuss given what's happening on the world stage and in the Middle East, in particular. So we'll spend some time discussing the situation in Syria and the need for us to not only find a political solution to the tragic situation there, but also to address growing extremism inside of Syria, the spillover effects on Lebanon and Jordan, in particular.