

ty means, and it's why I'll keep fighting to restore it.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2 p.m. on March 21 in the Roosevelt

Room at the White House for broadcast on March 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 22.

Statement on the Fourth Anniversary of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

March 23, 2014

Since I signed the Affordable Care Act into law, the share of Americans with insurance is up, and the growth of health care costs is down to its slowest rate in 50 years, two of the most promising developments for our middle class and our fiscal future in a long time.

More Americans with insurance have gained new benefits and protections: the 100 million Americans who've gained the right to free preventive care like mammograms and contraception, the 8 million seniors who've saved thousands of dollars on their prescription drugs, and the untold number of families who won't be driven into bankruptcy by out-of-pocket costs because this law prevents insurers from placing dollar limits on the care you can receive.

More Americans without insurance have gained coverage. Over the past 4 years, over 3 million young Americans have been able to stay on their family plans. And over the past 5½ months alone, more than 5 million Americans have signed up to buy private health insurance plans on healthcare.gov, plans that can no longer discriminate against preexisting conditions or charge you more just because you're a woman or a cancer survivor. And millions more have enrolled in Medicaid.

It is these numbers, and the stories behind each one of them, that will ultimately determine the fate of this law. It is the measurable

outcomes—in savings for families and businesses, healthier kids with better performance in schools, seniors with more money to spend because they're paying less for their medicine, and young entrepreneurs who'll have the freedom to try new jobs or chase that new idea—that will ultimately offer more security and peace of mind to more Americans who work hard to get ahead.

Last month, after her first wellness visit under her new insurance plan, a woman from Colorado shared with me what that peace of mind meant to her. "After using my new insurance for the first time, you probably heard my sigh of relief from the White House," she wrote. "I felt like a human being again. I felt that I had value."

This is what's at stake anytime anyone, out of some outdated obsession, pledges to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act. And that's why my administration will spend the fifth year of this law and beyond working to implement and improve on it.

If you're an American who wants to get covered—or if you know someone who should—it's now last call for 2014. March 31 is the deadline to get covered this year. So check out healthcare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596 to see what new choices are available to you, and get covered today.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands in Amsterdam, Netherlands

March 24, 2014

Prime Minister Rutte. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Netherlands. Welcome

to Amsterdam. And, Barack, welcome to this very special location.

We are standing here on historic ground, surrounded by the finest paintings that Holland has produced and only a stone's throw away from the house of John Adams, the first American Ambassador to the Netherlands and second President of United States. It's a location that symbolizes the enduring partnership between the U.S. and the Netherlands. Our shared history and heritage go back a long way.

As a historian, it was a special moment for me when earlier this morning, I was able to show President Obama two original documents from our National Archives that played an important role in the age-old friendship between our two countries. The first was our own Declaration of Independence, the *Plakkaat van Verlatinghe* of 1581, which inspired Thomas Jefferson and his peers. The second was the American-Dutch Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1782, another remarkable document from an age when peace between countries was usually a hard-fought affair. And today, friendship is still at the heart of the relationship between the United States and the Netherlands, along with trade, shared values, and joint responsibilities.

Since that first treaty, we have worked together in the growing awareness that economic prosperity, a safe and stable world, and international cooperation go hand in hand. With this in mind, the President and I talked about a wide range of subjects, starting with joint climate initiatives and the new steps we will take today in that regard. The Netherlands is joining with United States and a group of other countries in a bid to stop international public funding of new coal-fired power plants, for example, by multilateral development banks. We want to achieve an international level playing field to ensure that private and public parties invest in green growth wherever possible.

We also discussed the important topic of the Transatlantic and Investment Partnership Agreement between the EU and the U.S. Once concluded, this agreement will create more economic growth and jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. Importantly, it will set new standards that will benefit global trade and third countries as well. This partnership will

bolster our excellent bilateral economic ties even further.

During our conversation, I stressed how much we value this partnership. The Netherlands is the world's third largest investor in the United States, and we are home to some 1,800 American businesses.

And of course, we also spoke about a major international security issues in Syria, Iran, and Ukraine. Concerning the last, we both regard Russia's attempt to annex the Crimea as a flagrant breach of international law, and we condemn its actions in the strongest possible terms. The presence of so many world leaders in the Netherlands this week presents an important opportunity for the international community to discuss this subject, as well as other pressing issues that affect our common interests.

Finally, we looked ahead at the Nuclear Security Summit today and tomorrow. President Obama deserves all the credit for getting this topic high on the agenda. In 2010, Washington hosted the first summit on this theme. In 2012, it was Seoul's turn. And now the Netherlands is proud to host the summit today and tomorrow in The Hague that will bring us closer to the goal of securing potentially dangerous nuclear material.

Barack, your presence underlines the importance of the summit, and this event, too, demonstrates the strength of the bilateral ties between our countries and of our joint commitment to peace, security, and democracy. I'm delighted to be able to reaffirm that publicly here at this splendid location.

Again, thank you for coming.

President Obama. Well, Mark, thank you. And it is a splendid location. I'm so grateful for your kind words. We were very pleased to welcome you back in 2011 to the White House, and I appreciate your warm welcome today. This is my first visit to Amsterdam and to The Hague and to the Netherlands, and I'm so pleased that I've had a chance already to meet some wonderful students. I want to thank the mayor and the curator for their hospitality as well. I'm proud to be here with some of the Dutch masters who I studied in school and to

see just the extraordinary traditions of this great country.

I'd be remiss if I did not mention that I'm proud of both of our teams at the Olympics. So in addition to painting, you really know how to speed skate. [*Laughter*]

As the Prime Minister said, we just had an excellent opportunity to experience the museum and to see those documents, including the Treaty of Friendship that John Adams negotiated more than 200 years ago, as a reminder of the historic ties between our countries. And this is—of all the press conferences I've done, this is easily the most impressive backdrop that I've had to a press conference.

Of course, we're here for our third Nuclear Security Summit. And I want to thank His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, as well as Mark, the people of Netherlands, for all the preparations that go into bringing together so many heads of state. This is just one more example of Dutch leadership, not just on nuclear security, but on many global challenges.

As you know, the Netherlands is one of our closest allies, and our cooperation underscores a larger point: Our NATO allies are our closest partners on the world stage. Europe is the cornerstone of America's engagement with the world. And today we focused on several priorities, in Europe and beyond.

First, we obviously spent a considerable amount of time on the situation in Ukraine. Europe and America are united in our support of the Ukrainian Government and the Ukrainian people. We're united in imposing a cost on Russia for its actions so far. Prime Minister Rutte rightly pointed out yesterday that growing sanctions would bring significant consequences to the Russian economy. And I'll be meeting with my fellow G-7 leaders later today, and we'll continue to coordinate closely with the Netherlands and our European partners as we go forward.

Second, I thanked the Prime Minister for the Netherlands' strong commitment and contributions to NATO. Dutch forces have served with distinction in Afghanistan and joined us in confronting piracy off the Horn of Africa. Through NATO, the Netherlands contributed

to the deployment of Patriot air batteries in Turkey and are making important investments in NATO defense capabilities. Dutch forces are also making critical contributions to the international stabilization mission in Mali. So, across the board, the Dutch are making their presence felt in a very positive way, and we're very grateful for that.

Third, we discussed how we can keep expanding the trade that creates jobs for our people. We're already among each other's largest trade and investment partners, but we can always do more. And so I appreciated the Netherlands' strong support for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or T-TIP, which can fuel growth both in the United States and in Europe, especially for our small and medium-sized companies.

Fourth, we discussed a range of global challenges. As the—and as the United States and the P5-plus-1 partners continue negotiations with Iran, we have the basis for a practical solution that resolves concerns over Iran's nuclear program. But at the same time, I think it's important that everyone remember, during these negotiations, we'll continue to enforce the overall sanctions architecture that helped bring Iran to the table in the first place.

I also wanted to commend the Netherlands for its leadership in the international effort to destroy Syria's chemical weapons, and that includes your role as the host of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. And more broadly, our two countries are going to keep working together to deliver humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people.

And, finally, we reaffirmed our shared determination to confront climate change and its effects, including rising sea levels, which obviously is something that the Netherlands is concerned about, given your experience with seas and tides. We're pleased that the Netherlands has joined our initiative that will virtually end all public financing for coal-fired plants abroad. It's concrete action like this that can keep making progress on reducing emissions while we develop new global agreements on climate change.

So final note: When John Adams was negotiating the treaty that we saw earlier, he wrote that the Dutch have—and I’m quoting here—have always “distinguished themselves by an inviolable attachment to freedom and the rights of nations.” That was true then; it remains true today.

So, Mark, I want to thank you and the Dutch people for your hospitality, for your organization, for your partnership, and for your leadership on the world stage. And I

want to thank you for sharing these extraordinary paintings with me this morning. *Dank u wel.*

Prime Minister Rutte. Very good.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:49 a.m. in the Gallery of Honor at the Rijksmuseum. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Eberhard van der Laan of Amsterdam; and Wim Pijbes, general director, Rijksmuseum.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Xi Jinping of China in The Hague, Netherlands

March 24, 2014

President Obama. Well, I’m very much looking forward to having another discussion with President Xi and his delegation. This happens to be the 35th anniversary of the reestablishment of formal relations between our two countries, and I think that we have made incredible strides over these past several decades, and I know that President Xi and I are both committed to continuing to strengthen and build a new model of relations between our countries.

I want to, first of all, thank the President and the First Lady of China for being such gracious hosts when Michelle, Malia, and Sasha first arrived in China. And they’re still there. They’ve seen the Great Wall; they’ve seen the Terracotta Warriors. And from my phone calls with them, they’re having an extraordinary time. So I want to thank the President for his outstanding hospitality towards my family.

And Michelle had an opportunity to meet with a number of young people in China, and these kinds of person-to-person ties are extremely important. And she also played some table tennis, although I think this was not the high-level Ping-Pong diplomacy that we saw in the past. [*Laughter*]

Today, in addition to the important work that we’re going to be doing at the Nuclear Security Summit, we’ll have the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues that are of mutual interest, including the denuclearization of

North Korea, situations surrounding climate change, as well as world issues like the situation in Ukraine.

And because of the numerous meetings and fora that we’ve been able to establish, we’re able not only to work on those issues of mutual interest and concern, but we’re also able to work through frictions that exist in our relations around issues like human rights or dealing with maritime issues in the South China Sea and in the Pacific region in a way that’s constructive and, hopefully, will lead to resolutions and improved solutions for all parties concerned.

We’ll also have the opportunity to discuss economic issues, which are a cornerstone of our relationship, and the importance of our trading relationship and making sure that we are both abiding by the rules that allow us to create jobs and prosperity in both of our countries.

So I think it’s fair to say that this bilateral relationship has been as important as any bilateral relationship in the world, and we’ve made great strides. I believe ultimately that by working together, China and the United States can help to strengthen international law, respect for the sovereignty of nations, and establish the kinds of rules internationally that allow all people to thrive.

And so I’m very much looking forward to this conversation and to the interaction with