

members have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine to fulfill their mandate.

6. This Group came together because of shared beliefs and shared responsibilities. Russia's actions in recent weeks are not consistent with them. Under these circumstances, we will not participate in the planned Sochi Summit. We will suspend our participation in the G-8 until Russia changes course and the environment comes back to where the G-8 is able to have a meaningful discussion and will meet again in G-7 format at the same time as planned, in June 2014, in Brussels, to discuss the broad agenda we have together. We have also advised our Foreign Ministers not to attend the April meeting in Moscow. In addition, we have decided that G-7 Energy Ministers will meet to discuss ways to strengthen our collective energy security.

7. At the same time, we stand firm in our support for the people of Ukraine who seek to restore unity, democracy, political stability, and economic prosperity to their country. We commend the Ukrainian government's ambitious reform agenda and will support its imple-

mentation as Ukraine seeks to start a new chapter in its history, grounded on a broad-based constitutional reform, free and fair presidential elections in May, promotion of human rights and respect of national minorities.

8. The International Monetary Fund has a central role leading the international effort to support Ukrainian reform, lessening Ukraine's economic vulnerabilities, and better integrating the country as a market economy in the multilateral system. We strongly support the IMF's work with the Ukrainian authorities and urge them to reach a rapid conclusion. IMF support will be critical in unlocking additional assistance from the World Bank, other international financial institutions, the EU, and bilateral sources. We remain united in our commitment to provide strong financial backing to Ukraine, to co-ordinate our technical assistance, and to provide assistance in other areas, including measures to enhance trade and strengthen energy security

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

Remarks at the Closing Session of the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, Netherlands

March 25, 2014

President Obama. Well, thank you very much, Mark. Let me begin just by saying that—to Prime Minister Rutte and all the people here in the Netherlands who were involved in organizing this summit, you did an extraordinary job. And I think we would all agree that this was as well designed and well executed as any international summit that we've attended. And so we're very grateful, and you've set a high bar for the work that needs to be done in Chicago.

Two things I want to do is, is number one, just remind everybody what has been accomplished. In previous summits, as a consequence of the work that's been done collectively, 12 countries and 2 dozen nuclear facilities around the world have rid themselves entirely of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. Dozens of nations have boosted security at their nuclear storage sites, built their own

countersmuggling teams, or created new centers to improve nuclear security and training. The IAEA is stronger. More countries have ratified the treaties and international partnerships at the heart of our efforts.

And at this particular summit, we've seen such steps as Belgium and Italy completing the removal of their excess supplies of highly enriched uranium and plutonium so that those supplies can be eliminated. In a major commitment, Japan announced that it will work with the United States to eliminate hundreds of kilograms of weapons-usable nuclear material from one of their experimental reactors, which would be enough for a dozen nuclear weapons. Dozens of other nations have agreed to take specific steps towards improving nuclear security in their own countries and to support global efforts.

So what's been valuable about this summit is that it has not just been talk, it's been action. And that is because of the leadership that has been shown by heads of state—of government and heads of government that have participated in this effort, as well as the extraordinary work of Foreign Ministers and sherpas and others who have helped to move this process forward.

I'm looking forward to hosting all of you in the United States in 2016. We had a good discussion this afternoon about how we should conceive of this summit 2 years from now. The consensus, based on what I heard, was that we should recognize this next summit will be a transition summit in which heads of state and government are still participating, but that we are shifting towards a more sustainable model that utilizes our ministers, our technical people, and we are building some sort of architecture that can effectively focus and implement on these issues and supplement the good work that is being done by the IAEA and others.

So I see two tasks before us over the next 2 years. Number one is, we have to set very clearly what are the actionable items that we've already identified that we know can get done if we have the political will to do them, and let's go ahead and get them done so that in 2016 we can report out that we have made extraordinary progress and achieved many of the benchmarks and targets that we had set at the very first Nuclear Security Summit. In other words, I think it is important for us not to relax, but rather, accelerate our efforts over the next 2 years, sustain momentum so that we finish strong in 2016. And I—my team will be contacting all of you to find out specific ways in which you think we can move the ball forward over the next 2 years.

The second thing we'll be doing is soliciting ideas from each of you about the ultimate architecture that should be constructed to en-

sure that beyond 2016 we are able to keep this process alive and effective and that we are able to sync up the efforts of the Nuclear Security Summit with existing institutions like the IAEA, Interpol, the United Nations, some of the treaties that are already in force.

All of you have important views on that, and we're going to want to make sure that you provide them so that by the time we get to 2016, we have a well-thought-out process that can be ratified at that meeting.

So I cannot thank you enough for the extraordinary efforts that all of you have already made. I cannot guarantee that the videos will be as good at the Washington conference as they have been here. We may not be as creative and imaginative as Mark and his team have been. But I promise you that we will continue to stay focused on this very important issue, and we look forward to your contributions in 2016 in the United States.

Thank you very much, Mark.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands. We can now officially hand over the chair of the NSS, sir.

President Obama. Here we go. All right.

Prime Minister Rutte. But you can see there's missing parts in all of yesterday. And now it's again missing.

President Obama. Okay. I just want to make sure this is not radioactive. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Prime Minister Rutte symbolically handed over the Nuclear Security Summit chairmanship to President Obama.*]

Prime Minister Rutte. No, no, no. It is not. [*Inaudible*] Good luck.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. at the World Forum.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands in The Hague March 25, 2014

Prime Minister Rutte. Good afternoon. Making the world safer by preventing nuclear terror-

ism—that was President Obama's goal when he made nuclear security an international priority