

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Patrick J. Leahy, President pro tempore of the Senate.

### Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Commencement of United States Military Operations in Iraq *September 8, 2014*

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

As I reported on August 8 and 17 and on September 1, 2014, U.S. Armed Forces have conducted targeted airstrikes in Iraq for the limited purposes of stopping the advance on Erbil by the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), supporting civilians trapped on Mount Sinjar, supporting operations by Iraqi forces to recapture the Mosul Dam, and supporting an operation to deliver humanitarian assistance to civilians in the town of Amirli, Iraq.

On September 6, 2014, pursuant to my authorization, U.S. Armed Forces commenced targeted airstrikes in the vicinity of the Haditha Dam in support of Iraqi forces in their efforts to retain control of and defend this critical infrastructure site from ISIL. These additional military operations will be limited in their scope and duration as necessary to address this threat and prevent endangerment of U.S. per-

sonnel and facilities and large numbers of Iraqi civilians.

I have directed these actions, which are in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. These actions are being undertaken in coordination with and at the request of the Iraqi government.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

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### Address to the Nation on United States Strategy To Combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization *September 10, 2014*

My fellow Americans, tonight I want to speak to you about what the United States will do with our friends and allies to degrade and ultimately destroy the terrorist group known as ISIL.

As Commander in Chief, my highest priority is the security of the American people. Over the last several years, we have consistently taken the fight to terrorists who threaten our country. We took out Usama bin Laden and much of Al Qaida's leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We've targeted Al Qaida's affiliate in Yemen and recently eliminated the top

commander of its affiliate in Somalia. We've done so while bringing more than 140,000 American troops home from Iraq and drawing down our forces in Afghanistan, where our combat mission will end later this year. Thanks to our military and counterterrorism professionals, America is safer.

Still, we continue to face a terrorist threat. We can't erase every trace of evil from the world, and small groups of killers have the capacity to do great harm. That was the case before 9/11, and that remains true today. And that's why we must remain vigilant as threats