

days, will bring—will transform to a real peace, which can help us to save Donetsk and Luhansk from the very difficult situation the people of which appear now.

I think that they're—I thank very much to the President for the very fruitful, very open, very straightforward dialogue, and I thank you for the decision we reached today. I think that

the—your position as the friend of Ukraine: friend in need is a friend indeed. You're a real friend, of course.

*President Obama.* Thank you very much. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

## Remarks on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Train and Equip Syrian Opposition Forces *September 18, 2014*

Good evening. Today the United States continues to build a broad international coalition to degrade and ultimately destroy the terrorist group known as ISIL. As part of the air campaign, France will join in strikes against ISIL targets in Iraq. And as one of our oldest and closest allies, France is a strong partner in our efforts against terrorism, and we're pleased that French and American servicemembers will once again work together on behalf of our shared security and our shared values.

More broadly, more than 40 countries—including Arab nations—have now offered assistance as part of this coalition. This includes support for Iraqi forces, strengthening the Iraqi Government, providing humanitarian aid to Iraqi civilians, and doing their part in the fight against ISIL.

Here at home, I'm pleased that Congress—a majority of Democrats and a majority of Republicans, in both the House and the Senate—have now voted to support a key element of our strategy: our plan to train and equip the opposition in Syria so they can help push back these terrorists. As I said last week, I believe that we're strongest as a nation when the President and Congress work together. And I want to thank leaders in Congress for the speed and seriousness with which they approached this urgent issue, in keeping with the bipartisanship that is the hallmark of American foreign policy at its best.

These Syrian opposition forces are fighting both the brutality of ISIL terrorists and the tyranny of the Asad regime. We had already

ramped up our assistance, including military assistance, to the Syrian opposition. With this new effort, we'll provide training and equipment to help them grow stronger and take on ISIL terrorists inside Syria. This program will be hosted outside of Syria, in partnership with Arab countries, and it will be matched by our increasing support for Iraqi Government and Kurdish forces in Iraq.

This is in keeping with a key principle of our strategy: The American forces that have been deployed to Iraq do not and will not have a combat mission; their mission is to advise and assist our partners on the ground. As I told our troops yesterday, we can join with allies and partners to destroy ISIL without American troops fighting another ground war in the Middle East.

The strong bipartisan support in Congress for this new training effort shows the world that Americans are united in confronting the threat from ISIL, which has slaughtered so many innocent civilians. With their barbaric murder of two Americans, these terrorists thought they could frighten us, or intimidate us, or cause us to shrink from the world, but today they're learning the same hard lesson of petty tyrants and terrorists who have gone before.

As Americans, we do not give in to fear. And when you harm our citizens, when you threaten the United States, when you threaten our allies, it doesn't divide us, it unites us. We pull together, we stand together, to defend this country that we love and to make sure justice is done, as well as to join with those who seek a

better future of dignity and opportunity for all people.

And today, our strikes against these terrorists continue. We're taking out their terrorists. We're destroying their vehicles and equipment and stockpiles. And we salute our dedicated pilots and crews who are carrying out these missions with great courage and skill.

As Commander in Chief, I could not be more proud of their service. As I told some of our troops yesterday, the American people are

united in our support for them and for their families. And as we go forward, as one Nation, I'd ask all Americans to keep our forces and their families in their thoughts and prayers. Thanks very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.J. Res. 124; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

## Remarks Announcing the "It's On Us" Campaign To Prevent Sexual Assault on College Campuses

September 19, 2014

Thank you so much, everybody. Please have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House, everybody. And thank you to Joe Biden not just for the introduction, not just for being a great Vice President, but for decades, since long before he was in his current office, Joe has brought unmatched passion to this cause. And—[*applause*]. He has.

And at a time when domestic violence was all too often seen as a private matter, Joe was out there saying that this was unacceptable. Thanks to him and so many others, last week, we were able to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the law Joe wrote, a law that transformed the way we handle domestic abuse in this country: the Violence Against Women Act.

And we're here to talk today about an issue that is a priority for me, and that's ending campus sexual assault. I want to thank all of you who are participating. I particularly want to thank Lilly for her wonderful presentation and grace. I want to thank her parents for being here. As a father of two daughters, I on the one hand am enraged about what has happened; on the other hand, am empowered to see such an incredible young woman be so strong and do so well. And we're going to be thrilled watching all of the great things she is going to be doing in her life. So the—we're really proud of her.

I want to thank the White House Council on Women and Girls. Good Job. Valerie, thank

you. I want to thank our White House Adviser on Violence Against Women, the work that you do every day partnering with others to prevent the outrage, the crime of sexual violence.

We've got some outstanding lawmakers with us. Senator Claire McCaskill is right here from the great State of Missouri, who I love. And we've got Dick Blumenthal from the great State of Connecticut, as well as Congresswoman Susan Davis. So thank you so much, I'm thrilled to have you guys here.

I also want to thank other Members of Congress who are here and have worked on this issue so hard for so long. A lot of the people in this room have been on the front lines in fighting sexual assault for a long time. And along with Lilly, I want to thank all the survivors who are here today and so many others around the country. Lilly, I'm sure, took strength from a community of people—some who came before, some who were peers—who were able to summon the courage to speak out about the darkest moment of their lives. They endure pain and the fear that too often isolates victims of sexual assault. So, when they give voice to their own experiences, they're giving voice to countless others—women and men, girls and boys—who still suffer in silence.

So to the survivors who are leading the fight against sexual assault on campuses, your efforts have helped to start a movement. I know that, as Lilly described, there are times where the