

So I'll just close with this basic thought. As challenging as things are—people always ask me, Barack, you must be feeling overwhelmed. They don't say "Barack" these days, but Michelle does. [*Laughter*] And the truth is, perhaps I'm just a little simple. I have never been more optimistic about America's prospects. I look at the data, and I look at the facts, and we have the best cards as long as we're playing right. And I think if we've got a Congress that recognizes that possibility and that opportunity, then we will play those cards right. And our kids will inherit a world that is safer and more prosperous and healthier and has less conflict than ever before in human history. And what

an extraordinary possibility to be able to deliver that to our kids and our grandkids. That's in part because of you. So thank you.

All right, guys. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:48 p.m. at the residence of Elizabeth Strickler and Mark T. Gallogly. In his remarks, he referred to Katharine, Grace, and Nell Gallogly, daughters of Ms. Strickler and Mr. Gallogly. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to Iraq and the Authorization of Military Operations in Syria

September 23, 2014

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

In my reports of August 8 and 17 and September 1 and 8, 2014, I described a series of discrete military operations in Iraq to stop the advance on Erbil by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), support civilians trapped on Mount Sinjar, support operations by Iraqi forces to recapture the Mosul Dam, support an operation to deliver humanitarian assistance to civilians in the town of Amirli, Iraq, and conduct airstrikes in the vicinity of Haditha Dam.

As I noted in my address to the Nation on September 10, with a new Iraqi government in place, and following consultations with allies abroad and the Congress at home, I have ordered implementation of a new comprehensive and sustained counterterrorism strategy to degrade, and ultimately defeat, ISIL. As part of this strategy, I have directed the deployment of 475 additional U.S. Armed Forces personnel to Iraq, and I have determined that it is necessary and appropriate to use the U.S. Armed Forces to conduct coordination with Iraqi forces and to provide training, communications support, intelligence support, and other support, to se-

lect elements of the Iraqi security forces, including Kurdish Peshmerga forces. I have also ordered the U.S. Armed Forces to conduct a systematic campaign of airstrikes and other necessary actions against these terrorists in Iraq and Syria. These actions are being undertaken in coordination with and at the request of the Government of Iraq and in conjunction with coalition partners.

It is not possible to know the duration of these deployments and operations. I will continue to direct such additional measures as necessary to protect and secure U.S. citizens and our interests against the threat posed by ISIL.

I have directed these actions, which are in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States, pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107-40 and Public Law 107-243) and as Chief Executive, as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public

Sept. 23 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

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 Syria *September 23, 2014*

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

As I have repeatedly reported to the Congress, U.S. Armed Forces continue to conduct operations in a variety of locations against al-Qa'ida and associated forces. In furtherance of these U.S. counterterrorism efforts, on September 22, 2014, at my direction, U.S. military forces began a series of strikes in Syria against elements of al-Qa'ida known as the Khorasan Group. These strikes are necessary to defend the United States and our partners and allies against the threat posed by these elements.

I have directed these actions, which are in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States, pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Com-

mander in Chief (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107–40) and as Chief Executive, as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States. 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

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.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City *September 24, 2014*

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen: We come together at a crossroad between war and peace, between disorder and integration, between fear and hope.

Around the globe, there are signposts of progress. The shadow of world war that existed at the founding of this institution has been lifted, and the prospect of war between major powers reduced. The ranks of member states has more than tripled, and more people live under governments they elected. Hundreds of millions of human beings have been freed from the prison of poverty, with the proportion of those living in extreme poverty cut in half. And the world economy continues to strengthen after the worst financial crisis of our lives.

Today, whether you live in downtown Manhattan or in my grandmother's village more than 200 miles from Nairobi, you can hold in your hand more information than the world's greatest libraries. Together, we've learned how to cure disease and harness the power of the wind and the sun. The very existence of this institution is a unique achievement: the people of the world committing to resolve their differences peacefully and to solve their problems together. I often tell young people in the United States that despite the headlines, this is the best time in human history to be born, for you are more likely than ever before to be literate, to be healthy, to be free to pursue your dreams.