

I've already given a long speech today. I'm going to be very brief. As host nation, I want to thank all of you for your commitment to our work. Nobody works harder and truer to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations than our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon. And so I want to publicly thank him for his tireless work on every issue, from Ebola to climate change, to violations of human rights, to armed conflict, he is on the job and been doing outstanding work.

I also want to recognize the thousands of men and women at the United Nations who give meaning and action to all the words that we politicians produce during the course of General Assembly meetings and Security Council meetings. Oftentimes, they operate outside of the limelight. But if it were not for their dedication, hard work, and sacrifice, then this would just be a debating club. And so we want to thank very much the—all the employees and staff of the United Nations not just for helping to facilitate this meeting, but for what they do all year around. Thank you very much.

Along those same lines, we want to salute the thousands of Blue Helmets who stand sentinel around the world, particularly across Africa and the Middle East. The tragic loss of five peacekeepers in Mali last week reminds us that there are real risks that these peacekeepers

take on so that others can lead a better life. We salute the United Nations aid workers who are on the front lines of humanitarian efforts in Syria, delivering comfort and support to civilians battered by civil war. And we thank the heroic U.N. health workers in West Africa who are combating Ebola and caring for the sick at some risk to themselves.

These men and women, from so many of our nations, reflect the common pursuit of peace and prosperity. We could not be prouder of their work. They represent what I think the United Nations should be all about. And when I think of them, I'm reminded that although all of us have the extraordinary privilege of representing our countries in very high offices, the truth is, change happens on the ground, and none of us can do this alone.

So I propose a toast to the human spirit that these workers and personnel and peacekeepers around the world represent: the best of who we are and what we all share in common as children of God and as people who hope to pass on peace and prosperity to our children and our grandchildren for generations to come.

Cheers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:51 p.m. at United Nations Headquarters.

Remarks at a United Nations Security Council Summit on Foreign Terrorist Fighters in New York City *September 24, 2014*

Thank you, His Excellency, the Secretary-General, for his statement. I'll now make a statement in my capacity as President of the United States.

Mr. Secretary-General, heads of state and government, distinguished representatives, thank you for being here today.

In the nearly 70 years of the United Nations, this is only the sixth time that the Security Council has met at a level like this. We convene such sessions to address the most urgent threats to peace and security. And I called this meeting because we must come together—as

nations and an international community—to confront the real and growing threat of foreign terrorist fighters.

As I said earlier today, the tactic of terrorism is not new. So many nations represented here today, including my own, have seen our citizens killed by terrorists who target innocents. And today the people of the world have been horrified by another brutal murder, of Hervé Gourdel, by terrorists in Algeria. President Hollande, we stand with you and the French people not only as you grieve this terrible loss,

but as you show resolve against terror and in defense of liberty.

What brings us together today, what is new, is the unprecedented flow of fighters in recent years to and from conflict zones, including Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Libya, and most recently, Syria and Iraq.

Our intelligence agencies estimate that more than 15,000 foreign fighters from more than 80 nations have traveled to Syria in recent years. Many have joined terrorist organizations such as Al Qaida's affiliate, the Nusra Front, and ISIL, which now threatens people across Syria and Iraq. And I want to acknowledge and thank Prime Minister Abadi of Iraq for being here today.

In the Middle East and elsewhere, these terrorists exacerbate conflicts, they pose an immediate threat to people in these regions; and as we've already seen in several cases, they may try to return to their home countries to carry out deadly attacks. In the face of this threat, many of our nations, working together and through the United Nations, have increased our cooperation. Around the world, foreign terrorist fighters have been arrested, plots have been disrupted, and lives have been saved.

Earlier this year, at West Point, I called for a new partnership to help nations build their capacity to meet the evolving threat of terrorism, including foreign terrorist fighters. And preventing these individuals from reaching Syria and then slipping back across our borders is a critical element of our strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL.

The historic resolution that we just adopted enshrines our commitment to meet this challenge. It is legally binding. It establishes new obligations that nations must meet. Specifically, nations are required to "prevent and suppress the recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping" of foreign terrorist fighters, as well as the financing of their travel or activities. Nations must "prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups" through their territory and ensure that their domestic laws allow for the prosecution of those who attempt to do so.

The resolution we passed today calls on nations to help build the capacity of states on the

front lines of this fight, including with the best practices that many of our nations have approved yesterday, and which the United States will work to advance through our Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund. This resolution will strengthen cooperation between nations, including sharing more information about the travel and activities of foreign terrorist fighters. And it makes clear that respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law is not optional, it is an essential part of successful counterterrorism efforts. Indeed, history teaches us that the failure to uphold these rights and freedoms can actually fuel violent extremism.

Finally, this resolution recognizes that there is no military solution to the problem of misguided individuals seeking to join terrorist organizations, and it therefore calls on nations to work together to counter the violent extremism that can radicalize, recruit, and mobilize individuals to engage in terrorism. Potential recruits must hear the words of former terrorist fighters who have seen the truth: that groups like ISIL betray Islam by killing innocent men, women, and children, the majority of whom are Muslim.

Often it is local communities—family, friends, neighbors, and faith leaders—that are best able to identify and help disillusioned individuals before they succumb to extremist ideologies and engage in violence. And that's why the United States Government is committed to working with communities in America and around the world to build partnerships of trust, respect, and cooperation.

Likewise, even as we are unrelenting against terrorists who threaten our people, we must redouble our work to address the conditions—the repression, the lack of opportunity, too often the hopelessness—that can make some individuals more susceptible to appeals to extremism and violence. And this includes continuing to pursue a political solution in Syria that allows all Syrians to live in security, dignity, and peace.

This is the work that we must do together as nations. These are the partnerships we must forge as an international community. And

these are the standards that we now must meet. Yet even as we're guided by the commitments that we make here today, let me close by stating the obvious. Resolutions alone will not be enough. Promises on paper cannot keep us safe. Lofty rhetoric and good intentions will not stop a single terrorist attack.

The words spoken here today must be matched and translated into action, into deeds, concrete action, within nations and between them, not just in the days ahead, but for years to come. For if there was ever a challenge in our interconnected world that cannot be met by one nation alone, it is this: terrorists crossing borders and threatening to unleash unspeakable violence. These terrorists believe our countries will be unable to stop them. The safety of our citizens demand that we do. And

I'm here today to say that all of you who are committed to this urgent work will find a strong and steady partner in the United States of America.

I now would like to resume my function as President of the Council. And I will now give the floor to the other members of the Security Council.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:11 p.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Hervé Gourdel, a French mountaineering guide who was killed by members of the Jund al-Khilafa terrorist organization in Kabylia, Algeria, on September 24; and Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi of Iraq. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Meeting of the Open Government Partnership in New York City *September 24, 2014*

Well, thank you very much. And thank you, Rakesh, for your introduction. It is wonderful to see all of you here today. And I still remember your eloquent words when we launched this effort 3 years ago, and I'm very grateful for the role you've played and NGOs have played and all the leadership that is represented here has played in making this a reality, which is making a real difference in the lives of so many countries that are participating.

I want to thank my good friend, President Yudhoyono, for your leadership and the example that Indonesia has tried to set as a country that has transitioned from a difficult past to a full-blown democracy. And I also want to thank Minister Kuntoro for hosting us here today. Both of them have shown extraordinary leadership in this partnership over the past several years.

President Yudhoyono will be—this will be the last time, I think, that we see each other in his official capacity, but not in terms of our friendship. And I think that it's fitting that he's participating here today and leading it, because it reflects the legacy of his work. And I also want to acknowledge my dear friend President Peña Nieto of Mexico, as well as President Zu-

ma of South Africa, who have agreed to lead the partnership in the coming year.

I'm thrilled to see so many leaders from civil society, men and women who stand up for equality and opportunity and justice and freedom every single day. And it's not always easy to do. Yesterday I had a chance to speak about the importance of supporting civil society across the globe, because throughout history, progress has always been driven by citizens who have the courage to raise their voices and imagine not just what is, but what might be, and that are willing to work to bring about the change that they seek.

Three years ago, the United States and seven other nations launched this Open Government Partnership to represent the other side of that equation, because when citizens demand progress, governments need to be able to respond. And in a new millennium flush with technology that allows us to connect with a tweet or a text, citizens rightly demand more responsiveness, more openness, more transparency, more accountability from their governments.

In just 3 short years, this partnership has grown from 8 nations to 64. It's helped to