

So we've got a lot more work to do, just because it's not in the headlines, and that's what this meeting is about. I want to thank everybody here who's been doing a great job on it.

All right. Thank you very much, everybody.

The President's Health

Q. How's your throat? How is the reflux?

The President. You know, actually, I am doing fine. That was a classic example of, if it weren't for the press pool, nobody would know about it. [*Laughter*]

Statement on the Situation in South Sudan *December 12, 2014*

Last December, when a political conflict erupted into violence in South Sudan, the hope and optimism the world felt with the founding of the new nation in 2011 was overtaken by images of bloodshed and grief. Instead of seeing the promise of their struggle for self-determination realized, the people of South Sudan have suffered countless, unimaginable tragedies. The magnitude of this crisis is felt in both the devastation that violence has left in towns and villages and the scars—visible and invisible—on the South Sudanese people.

Today I appeal to the leaders of South Sudan to pursue peace as a way to honor those who have died. It is in your hands to end the cycle of violence, to set forth on a course of re-

Q. We did a good job, huh?

The President. There's got to be something better to cover than the President's sore throat.

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:58 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 83; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

form and reconciliation, and to hold to account those responsible for atrocities. Leadership that recalls the promise of South Sudan is what the country now needs to end this senseless conflict.

To the people of South Sudan, who have suffered for far too long, I urge you to renew the spirit of hope, unity, and fortitude that enabled you almost 4 years ago to come together and vote for a brighter future. For the sake of future generations, I urge you to seek peaceful reconciliation rather than violent retribution. The United States will remain a friend to those who seek peace and progress and will stand with the people of South Sudan.

The President's Weekly Address *December 13, 2014*

Hi, everybody. It's the holidays, a season to give thanks for our many blessings: the love of family, the joy of good friends, the bonds of community, the freedom we cherish as Americans, the peace and justice we seek in the world.

As we go about our days, as we gather with loved ones and friends, it's important to remember: Our way of life—the freedom, prosperity and security that we enjoy as Americans—is not a gift that is simply handed to us.

It has to be earned, by every generation. And no one sacrifices more to preserve our blessings than our extraordinary men and women in uniform.

That's why, on Monday, I'll be visiting our troops at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey, to salute them for their service and thank them for their sacrifices. Since our Nation was attacked on 9/11, these men and women, like so many others in uniform, have met every mission we've asked of them. They