

I have now determined that that the provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea, including its destructive, coercive cyber-related actions during November and December 2014, actions in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874, 2087, and 2094, and commission of serious human rights abuses, constitute a continuing threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States.

The order is not targeted at the people of North Korea, but rather is aimed at the Government of North Korea and its activities that threaten the United States and others. The order leaves in place all existing sanctions imposed under Executive Orders 13466, 13551, and 13570. It provides criteria for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be an agency, instrumentality, or controlled entity of the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to be an official of the Government of North Korea;
- to be an official of the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the Government of

North Korea or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or

- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the Government of North Korea or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

In addition, the order suspends entry into the United States of any alien determined to meet one or more of the above criteria.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All executive agencies are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of Former Senator Edward W. Brooke III

January 3, 2015

Michelle and I were saddened to learn of the passing of former Senator Edward Brooke. Senator Brooke led an extraordinary life of public service, including his time in the U.S. Army. As the first African American elected as a State's attorney general and first African American U.S. Senator elected after reconstruction, Ed Brooke stood at the forefront of the battle for civil rights and economic fair-

ness. During his time in elected office, he sought to build consensus and understanding across partisan lines, always working towards practical solutions to our Nation's challenges. We express our deepest sympathies to his wife Anne, children Remi, Edwina, Edward, stepdaughter Melanie, family, friends, and the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

NOTE: The statement referred to Remi C. Goldstone and Edwina H. Petit, daughters,

and Melanie Laflamme, stepdaughter, of former Sen. Brooke.

Statement on the Death of Stuart O. Scott *January 4, 2015*

I will miss Stuart Scott. Twenty years ago, Stu helped usher in a new way to talk about our favorite teams and the day's best plays. For much of those 20 years, public service and campaigns have kept me from my family. But wherever I went, I could flip on the TV

and Stu and his colleagues on "SportsCenter" were there. Over the years, he entertained us, and in the end, he inspired us with courage and love. Michelle and I offer our thoughts and prayers to his family, friends, and colleagues.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico *January 6, 2015*

President Obama. Well, welcome, everybody. *Feliz año nuevo.* It is a pleasure to welcome once again President Peña Nieto, as well as his delegation. It's appropriate that our first meeting of the year is with one of our closest allies, neighbors, and friends.

Obviously, the bonds between Mexico and the United States are long and deep, not only because of the economic ties and strategic ties between our two countries, but most importantly, because of the people-to-people and cultural ties between our people—between our two countries. And this meeting has given us an opportunity to continue to find ways to deepen those bonds.

We've discussed something that is uppermost on the minds of most Mexicans and Americans, and that is, creating economic growth and jobs and prosperity. I've congratulated President Peña Nieto on some of his structural reforms that I think will unleash even further the enormous potential of the Mexican economy. And we also have discussed how we can continue to work on issues like clean energy, scientific and educational exchanges, improving cross-border commerce, and continue to strengthen the kinds of mutual investment and trade that creates jobs both in Mexico and the United States.

We also discussed the issues of security. And obviously, we've been following here in the

United States some of the tragic events surrounding the students whose lives were lost. And President Peña Nieto was able to describe to me the reform program that he's initiated around these issues. Our commitment is to be a friend and supporter of Mexico in its efforts to eliminate the scourge of violence and the drug cartels that are responsible for so much tragedy inside of Mexico. And we want to be a good partner in that process, recognizing that ultimately, it will be up to Mexico and its law enforcement to carry out the key decisions that need to be made.

I described to President Peña Nieto our efforts to fix our broken immigration system here in the United States and to strengthen our borders as well. I very much appreciate Mexico's efforts in addressing the unaccompanied children who we saw spiking during the summer. In part because of strong efforts by Mexico, including at its southern border, we've seen those numbers reduced back to much more manageable levels. But one of the things that we both agreed on is our continued need to work with Central American governments so that we can address some of the social and economic challenges there that led to that spike in unaccompanied children.

And at the same time, we very much appreciate Mexican—Mexico's commitment to work with us to send a very clear message around

the executive actions that I'm taking that we are going to provide a mechanism so that families are not separated who have been here for a long time. But we're also going to be much more aggressive at the border in ensuring that people come through the system legally. And the Mexican Government has been very helpful in how we can process and message that effectively both inside of the United States and in Mexico.

And finally, we had the chance to discuss—and we'll continue to discuss during lunch—some of the regional and international issues in which Mexico has been a very significant leader. I described my initiative to end the 50-year policy with relation to Cuba, to move towards what we hope will be a more constructive policy, but one that continues to emphasize human rights and democracy and political freedom. And at the Summit of the Americas, one of the things I informed Peña Nieto is, we will participate, but we'll insist that those topics are on the agenda.

And just as Mexico has been helpful on issues like Cuba, Mexico has also been a genuine leader internationally on issues like climate change. And so I very much appreciate the leadership of the Mexican Government and President Peña Nieto on these issues. I look forward to our collaboration in 2015, and I wish all the people of Mexico a very happy and healthy and prosperous 2015.

President Peña Nieto. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I first of all want to thank you, President Obama, for your hospitality in this, my first visit as President of the United Mexican States in the White House. And this is right at the beginning of this year 2015. And we, of course, both of us share the desire for it to be a great year for North America and the whole world and very especially for the relationship we've been building between Mexico and the United States, a relationship which is mainly based on friendship, cordiality, mutual respect, shared interest for prosperity and development for our nations.

First of all, in terms of the topics you have already shared with the press, first of all, I have made acknowledgement of the very intelligent

and audacious decision of your administration regarding the executive action for immigration, who is, of course, an act of justice for people who arrived from other parts of the world, but are now part of the U.S. community. And among the population that will surely be benefited through your executive action, sir, there's a very big majority of Mexican citizens.

And I have shared two fundamental topics on this item. The first measure is the support the Mexican Government is ready to give to the Mexican population living in the United States so that they can show the documentation that is necessary to prove that they have been in the United States before 2010 and also, of course, to have all the other requirements that are demanded for the Mexican population to be benefited through the executive action.

And first of all, yesterday we announced that Mexican migrants in the United States are going to be able to get their birth certificates without having to go to Mexico. They are going to be able to get this very important document. And of course, another very important factor that we've discussed is for Mexico to be doing everything it can so that this measure will only be benefiting those people that are supposed to be benefited and for it not to generate any misinformation or abuses, especially of the organized crime groups, groups that are doing human trafficking, and that they will be encouraging the type of migration which is exactly the type we don't want to have. And we will maintain the greater control of the southern border to continue having orderly migration and to avoid the items that I have just mentioned.

And among the multithematic agenda that we have between our two countries, one of the important items is modernizing border crossings between both nations. And this is something we've been working on because we want all these measures to be very visible and very tangible, the results of all those measures. For instance, let me inform you that we've been working on modernizing our border crossings so that we can have faster, more expeditious

trade and also the crossing of people, that this may take place in a very orderly fashion.

And there are different projects. Some of them have already been finished; others are in the process of implementation. And this, of course, constitutes less crossing time in terms of the transit of people and of goods through our borders.

And another very important topic of this multithematic agenda is continue favoring trade among both nations. We want to continue promoting investments, as it's already happening in our country, first of all, because we believe that these investments can be so helpful, and we want to continue having American investors in Mexico because this is an example of the way they recognize that Mexico is a trustworthy destination, a place where they can invest. And this is something we are going to continue to doing.

Yes, and as part of this multithematic agenda that we have, I wanted to share other results with you: for instance, the exchange of students. This exchange is increasing students from both countries, and this is very, very important for us. And the next item would be supporting our entrepreneurs, and this is very important for us to increase trade.

And I thank you, President Obama, for your willingness to continue working with Mexico in terms of security, especially in this clear challenge Mexico has to continue fighting organized crime. And here, we've been discussing topics that have to do with security, of course, and the collaboration, the exchange of information, and the logistics support that we're already getting. And I want to thank you, Presi-

dent Obama, for offering to continue these very efficient actions for us to fight insecurity and especially organized crime.

And finally, I have also made an acknowledgement in terms of the very audacious decisions that you have made to reestablish diplomatic relations with Cuba, with President Castro, and your countries. And we have offered our desire, our hope, to collaborate in this effort so that as soon as possible, you can continue with this reestablishment of relations with Cuba and that you can accomplish all the purposes you have set up to accomplish.

And Mexico will be a tireless supporter of the good relationship between two neighbors. This is the neighbor in the Caribbean, the neighbor in north of Mexico, Cuba, and the United States.

And I would finally like to thank you for your openness, for your willingness, your always very cordial and frank tone, President Obama, to continue to building a relationship between both nations of friends, mutual respect, to continue promoting the development of our countries.

I have already congratulated you for this happy new year, but this is for your family, President Obama, for your society, and for you, yourself, for this to be a great 2015.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Peña Nieto spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement—United States-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue *January 6, 2015*

When President Barack Obama and President Enrique Peña Nieto announced the creation of the United States-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED) in May 2013, they established a new strategic vision for our economic cooperation, focused on delivering tangible and positive economic benefits to the people of the United States and Mexico.

Our robust cooperation and dedication to finding binational solutions to shared economic challenges strengthens both of our countries and creates opportunities for our citizens. As neighbors and partners, we will continue to position North America as the most competitive and dynamic region in the world.

The first HLED meeting took place in Mexico City on September 20th, 2013. Today, Vice President Joe Biden hosted the second Cabinet-level meeting in Washington, DC to continue advancing our shared interests, strengthen our close and productive bilateral economic and commercial ties, enhance competitiveness, create additional trade and economic opportunities, and promote increased regional and global cooperation.

The benefits of our economic integration are clear, with more than \$500 billion in bilateral trade per year, and over \$100 billion in cross-border investment. U.S. and Mexican companies understand the value of our integrated economy, and have designed their productive processes accordingly, making full use of our competitive advantages and geographical proximity. Today, we build things together and many finished products exported by our countries reflect this high level of co-production. Our joint efforts through the HLED build on this important foundation by promoting regional integration and competitiveness, improving connectivity, and fostering economic growth, productivity, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

Mexico and the United States also are close partners in the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, an historic undertaking intended to boost economic growth, development, and prosperity, and support additional jobs in both countries. We have made significant progress over the past year in setting the stage to finalize a high-standard and comprehensive agreement. With the end coming into focus, the United States, Mexico and the other 10 TPP countries are strongly committed to moving the negotiations forward to conclusion as soon as possible. The substantial new opportunities for U.S. and Mexican exporters that the TPP will offer will be enhanced by our work together in the HLED.

Promoting Competitiveness and Connectivity

In 2014, the United States and Mexico made significant strides regarding mechanisms for transportation and communications infrastructure planning and development. These mecha-

nisms have directly facilitated the freight flow over the border, reduced bottlenecks, and improved logistics for cross-border trade. Faster, more efficient and closer links are helping boost our competitiveness. Our two governments concluded, in November 2014, the negotiation of a new air services agreement that will benefit travelers, shippers, airlines, and the economies of Mexico and the United States with competitive pricing and more convenient air services. The new agreement will enter into force once the approval processes of the two countries are finalized.

To reduce bottlenecks to trade at the border, we have worked to expand capacity at our ports of entry. At the El Chaparral-San Ysidro Port of Entry between San Diego and Tijuana, the busiest land crossing in the world, new construction has reduced wait times from three hours to approximately 30 minutes. In Nogales, Arizona, we doubled inspection capacity at the primary entry point of Mexican produce into the United States, making it faster and more efficient. The Mexican side of the Tijuana Airport Pedestrian Facility is about to be completed and the U.S. side is scheduled to be finished by the end of 2015.

We continue to work expeditiously on other priority ports of entry to facilitate the movement of both people and goods. We commend the work of the 21st Century Border Management Initiative, including its efforts to track and push forward new and improved border infrastructure at 13 border crossings. We are expediting the movement of goods and expanding supply chain security through a new mutual recognition arrangement between our trusted trader programs and the harmonization of data requirements for northbound rail shipments. We are also beginning to look at options to facilitate the crossing of oversized equipment necessary for exploration and production of energy.

Travel and tourism between the United States and Mexico is an important source of jobs, income, and cultural exchange between the two countries. The HLED established the Travel and Tourism Working Group to promote increased travel and tourism and better

travel experiences through increased knowledge of tourism flows. During 2014, the Group worked to improve the exchange of data, including statistics, tourism flows, market intelligence, stakeholders, and the economic benefits of these efforts. Our two countries have increased cooperation to manage more efficiently our telecommunications systems along the border, supporting both nations' goals of accelerating mobile broadband services. The United States also has provided legal and regulatory expertise to Mexico's new telecommunications regulator to support Mexico's goals of creating a competitive, market-based regulatory landscape more conducive for telecommunications investment.

Building a Modern, Innovative Knowledge Economy

The future competitiveness of our region depends on our ability to foster innovation, provide our citizens access to high quality education, and to promote a workforce with the skills necessary to succeed in the global economy. Together, we initiated the mapping of vibrant cross-border economic clusters, aiding our nations' ability to produce high-value products and services dependent on the innovation and linkages that these clusters generate. Under the Mexico-U.S. Entrepreneurship and Innovation Council (MUSEIC) launched in 2013, we formally signed agreements for U.S.-Mexican collaboration as a part of the Small Business Network of the Americas; held conferences and events designed to improve access to finance for businesses; and launched entrepreneurship training sessions. We continue to seek ways to link U.S. and Mexican small businesses interested in international trade, developing strategic partnerships and sharing best practices.

Both our governments also recognize women's empowerment and participation in economic affairs are crucial. Mexico and the United States have finalized an Action Plan for the U.S. Mexico Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the Empowerment of Women and Women's Human Rights. Additionally, Mexico joined

the Equal Futures Partnership and in September 2014 presented its national Action Plan to comply with the objectives of the Partnership. Also, under MUSEIC, we found ways to increasingly integrate women into growing economic sectors by creating networks of female entrepreneurs, mentoring projects, training programs and the creating a guarantee fund to ease women's access to financing. Finally, the Mexican Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare is working closely with the U.S. Department of Labor on a project aimed at implementing the new Mexican Federal Labor Law to prevent gender and sexual orientation discrimination in employment in Mexico. We are also actively engaging in discussions to eliminate regulatory divergences to reduce red tape and help businesses on both sides of the border.

The United States and Mexico have made a joint commitment to workforce development including quality post-secondary science, technology, engineering, and math education through the Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research (FOBESII). The Forum was officially launched by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the Secretary of State of the United States, in Mexico City on May 21st, 2014. More than 450 U.S. and Mexican partners from government, academia, civil society and the private sector participated in developing the FOBESII's Action Plan and four binational working groups were created to implement it.

Our two governments have also pledged to increase international educational exchanges in line with the United States' 100,000 Strong in the Americas Initiative and Mexico's *Proyecto 100,000*. In the past year alone, the Government of Mexico, with the collaboration of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, facilitated the travel of 27,000 Mexican students and teachers to the United States. Higher Education Institutions and Research Centers of both countries have signed more than 23 new educational agreements. We also have created new bilateral innovation and research consortia and boosted collaborations such as the High Altitude Cherenkov Observatory (HAWC), which will be

inaugurated in March 2015. In addition, last October, and under the joint leadership of both governments, we launched the binational webpage *Mobilitas* to promote academic opportunities in both the United States and Mexico.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Science and Technology Council of Mexico (CONACYT) have strengthened their bilateral collaboration and scientific research partnerships, through FOBESII. We are also working together on both sides of the border to prevent abuses within the temporary worker system to facilitate the safe exchange of human capital within North America, through projects such as the pilot program between Mexico's Secretary of Labor (STPS) and the Government of California.

Advancing Together—Our 2015 Strategic Goals

We look forward to advancing our work in 2015 in six key areas—energy; modern borders; work force development; regulatory cooperation; partnering in regional and global leadership; and stakeholder engagement.

- *Energy.* We will deepen energy sector cooperation between our countries—in areas such as sharing best practices for regulation in areas of common interests including cross-border energy development and transmission, ensuring high safety standards, and protecting the environment, enhancing our ability to collaborate on publicly available energy information, and promoting investment in workforce, safety and technological innovation—in order to ensure access to low cost and cleaner sources of energy for our citizens, resilient energy infrastructure, and a strong North American energy market. We are convinced that a more integrated and efficient regional energy sector that relies on enhanced energy cooperation will play a crucial role in boosting North America's competitiveness and leadership in the years to come.
- *Modern Border.* We are determined to make our border, where each day \$1.5

billion in two-way trade and more than 400,000 people legally cross between the United States and Mexico, a source of shared economic opportunity. We will continue to coordinate closely as we improve our border infrastructure by building new facilities and modernizing old crossings. We will also continue work to harmonize our data requirements to facilitate our customs processes in all modes of transportation. We will initiate operations of three new facilities: the West Rail Bypass in Matamoros, Tamaulipas-Brownsville, Texas; the Guadalupe-Tornillo Port of Entry in Chihuahua-Texas and the Tijuana Airport Pedestrian Facility, as well as progress on the proposed Otay II border crossing in the Tijuana-San Diego border region. We will work to implement the Mutual Recognition Arrangement between our respective trusted trader programs and continue joint efforts to facilitate the secure flow of travelers between our countries.

- *Workforce Development.* The knowledge economy is the key to competitiveness in the 21st Century. Therefore, it is fundamental to develop a workforce that is familiar with and responsive to economic priorities. Collaboration on this issue will benefit both our businesses and our people. Global abilities such as language acquisition, teamwork, and cross-cultural skills are essential elements for success in today's economy. The United States and Mexico will advance the ambitious goal of sending 100,000 Mexican students to the United States and receiving 50,000 U.S. students in Mexico by 2018, and will support university research partnerships to build upon our shared intellectual capital. Our two governments will contribute to our broader workforce development goals in key sectors such as energy, technology, and advanced manufacturing, through FOBESII and MUSEIC. We will work together on strategic issues through the Academies of Engineering and Science of both countries. Our gov-

ements look forward to working more closely with the private sector on both sides of the border in promoting internships and collaborating with universities to meet the training and education needs of the future.

- *Regulatory Cooperation.* To strengthen our region's economic integration, we will pursue regulatory cooperation activities in such areas as energy, food safety, and transportation to facilitate cross-border trade and co-production, and reduce regulatory barriers to businesses on both sides of the border.
- *Regional and Global Leadership.* Our governments and citizens are working jointly in many strategic and institutional areas that further strengthen our bilateral ties, as well as our relationship with other countries and regions in the globalized economy. We are working together to enhance government transparency under the Open Government Partnership, chaired this year by both the Mexican government and civil society. In 2015, we will continue to work together toward open government, open budgets, transparency and anti-corruption measures, demonstrate our commitments to progress in implementing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and will serve on each other's peer review teams in our respective G-20 Fossil Fuel Subsidy Peer Reviews. We will partner to promote inclusive and sustainable growth and development in Central America and the Caribbean, including in strategic areas such as energy and risk management. We will continue to work closely together

in pursuit of a 2015 climate change agreement that is effective, durable, and applicable to all Parties, including by submitting ambitious post-2020 mitigation targets and by working together through technical cooperation and information exchange on how best to implement our shared climate objectives, before and after 2020.

- *Stakeholder Engagement.* Outreach and stakeholder engagement remain fundamental components of the HLED and one of its most innovative aspects. We carefully consider the input and opinions of all of our stakeholders in formulating the goals of our Economic Dialogue. The government officials most involved with the HLED have also held several meetings with members of the private and academic sectors to get feedback on what they consider fundamental to making North America the most competitive and dynamic region. Ensuring this close dialogue remains will not only bring effectiveness and legitimacy to our joint work, but will also ensure it remains relevant, dynamic, pragmatic and appropriately focused. We are convinced that these must remain part of our joint agenda, if we are to deliver a more competitive and stronger North America.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to Secretary of Foreign Relations Jose Antonio Meade Kuribrena and Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare Alfonso Navarrete Prida of Mexico. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at a Meeting With Members of the Executive Committee of the National Governors Association and an Exchange With Reporters January 6, 2015

The President. Well, it is wonderful to welcome four of the members of the executive committee of the National Governors Association, including our chair here, John Hicken-

looper, a good friend from Colorado, as well as the vice chair, Gary Herbert, from Utah.

And one of the things I've consistently said is that Governors don't always have the luxury

to operate based on ideology and a bunch of abstract arguments. They've got to get things done, and people expect them to deliver regardless of their party affiliation. And I know the National Governors Association and the executive committee recognizes that what the American people expect from all of us is to deliver jobs and growth and health and prosperity and to work with them to create businesses and to move America forward.

The good news is that over the last several years, after one of the most wrenching economic crises that we've had in our lifetimes, America has moved forward. We now have the strongest job growth of any time since the 1990s. Manufacturing has come surging back. We have seen almost every economic indicator improve, in some ways improve dramatically. The deficit at the Federal level is now down by almost two-thirds. Health care costs are going up at their slowest rate in over 50 years. Education scores are up. High school graduation rates are up. College attendance is up. Our energy production is unparalleled at this point, both clean energy and traditional energy sources.

So we are poised to really build on that success in 2015. But it does require us to continue to make some good choices and, most importantly, to work together. So I'm looking forward to an opportunity to hearing the ideas of my fellow Governors—or these Governors, my fellow executives, about what they think needs to happen at the State level and how the Federal Government can be their most effective partner.

I know, in the past, infrastructure has been something that people are very interested in, making sure that there's more regulatory flexibility and smart regulation so that we're not impeding innovation and growth. I think there's enormous interest in job training and how we can continue to partner with businesses and community colleges and all the assets that we have to get people on the pipeline for jobs that are going to pay a good wage.

And a lot of these are issues and themes that I'll be talking about in my State of the Union. In fact, I'm going to be traveling, starting tomorrow. I'm going to Detroit to talk about

more things we can do to promote advanced manufacturing and innovation in our research base. I'll be going to Arizona to talk about how we can continue to strengthen our housing market that's come bouncing back, but still has a ways to go. And then, I'll be in Tennessee, where I have a chance to talk about some real innovation that's taking place to make higher education more affordable and a better value for young people.

So my main message to these Governors is going to be, let's figure out how to work together. And that's the same message that I'm going to have for Congress. I don't have to run for election again, but I intend, over the next 2 years, to do everything I can to make sure that the American people are even better off 2 years from now as they are today.

So, Mr. Chairman, do you want to just say something quick?

Governor John W. Hickenlooper of Colorado. Well, we're just grateful for the opportunity to sit down and share ideas and really find ways to work together more effectively. And when we met last year and you made a commitment to help us cut some of the redtape and begin to help us on a variety of fronts—education, health care, down the line—and then we saw results, that's really what it's about. And we appreciate that as Democrats and Republicans that we're all here and really, in a nonpartisan way.

Governors generally end up being a lot less partisan—

The President. Right.

Gov. Hickenlooper. —on a day-to-day basis than Congress does, and I think our commitment to you is that we're going to roll up our sleeves and say, all right, over these next couple of years, let's do everything we can to make this country better and better.

The President. Good. All right, everybody, thanks so much. Stay warm—

Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner/Senate Majority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell/Bipartisanship

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Stay warm out there.

Q. —any message for Mitch McConnell and John Boehner today as Congress comes back?

The President. I want to congratulate them once again on their positions as Speaker and Majority Leader in the Senate, and I'm very much looking forward to working with them. I already had a chance to say happy New Year to them. And I'm confident that there are going to be areas where we disagree and there will be some pitched battles, but I'm also confident that there are enormous areas of potential agreement that would deliver for the American people, and we just have to make sure that we focus on those areas where we can make significant progress together.

So I wish them well and—

Q. Did you speak with them today or earlier?

The President. I wish them well, and I think we're going to actually have, hopefully, a productive 2015.

All right? Thanks, guys.

Former Governor Robert F. McDonnell of Virginia

Q. Governor McDonnell sentenced to 2 years. Did you—have you heard that? And do you have any comment on that?

The President. I haven't heard that, and I have no comment on it.

Q. On Keystone—

The President. Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mark B. Dayton of Minnesota; and Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina.

Remarks on the Terrorist Attack in Paris, France, During a Meeting With Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State John F. Kerry *January 7, 2015*

I've reached out to President Hollande of France and hope to have the opportunity to talk to him today. But I thought it was appropriate for me to express my deepest sympathies to the people of Paris and the people of France for the terrible terrorist attack that took place earlier today.

I think that all of us recognize that France is one of our oldest allies, our strongest allies. They have been with us at every moment when we've—from 9/11 on, in dealing with some of the terrorist organizations around the world that threaten us. For us to see the kind of cowardly, evil attacks that took place today, I think, reinforces once again why it's so important for us to stand in solidarity with them, just as they stand in solidarity with us.

The fact that this was an attack on journalists, an attack on our free press, also underscores the degree to which these terrorists fear freedom: of speech and freedom of the press. But the one thing that I'm very confident about is that the values that we share with the

French people, a belief—a universal belief in freedom of expression, is something that can't be silenced because of the senseless violence of the few.

And so our counterterrorism cooperation with France is excellent. We will provide them with every bit of assistance that we can going forward. I think it's going to be important for us to make sure that we recognize, these kinds of attacks can happen anywhere in the world. And one of the things I'll be discussing with Secretary Kerry today is to make sure that we remain vigilant not just with respect to Americans living in Paris, but Americans living in Europe and in the Middle East and other parts of the world, and making sure that we stay vigilant in trying to protect them and to hunt down and bring the perpetrators of this specific act to justice and to roll up the networks that help to advance these kinds of plots.

In the end, though, the most important thing I want to say is that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who have