

measures against the people of Libya, including by using weapons of war, mercenaries, and wanton violence against unarmed civilians. In addition, there was a serious risk that Libyan state assets would be misappropriated by Qadhafi, members of his government, members of his family, or his close associates if those assets were not protected. The foregoing circumstances, the prolonged attacks, and the increased numbers of Libyans seeking refuge in other countries caused a deterioration in the security of Libya, posed a serious risk to its stability, and led me to declare a national emergency to deal with this threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

The violence that has spread throughout the country, resulting in the evacuation and temporary relocation of U.S. Embassy personnel, demonstrates the continued insecurity and threat to regional stability caused by the ongoing conflict in Libya. Much of the current conflict is over power and access to Libya's resources, and we run the risk of further destabilization if sanctions do not remain in effect. We continue to encourage Libyans to engage in dialogue and cease violence. Those that reject dialogue and obstruct and undermine Libya's democratic transition must be held account-

able, which is why we worked with the U.N. Security Council to pass U.N. Security Council Resolution 2174 in August 2014 to address threats to Libya's peace, security, and stability. While we work with the international community to identify those individuals who pose a threat to Libya's democratic transition, we must also continue to ensure that the appropriate sanctions remain in place.

The situation in Libya continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and we need to protect against the diversion of assets or other abuse by certain members of Qadhafi's family and other former regime officials. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Libya.

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 notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar February 24, 2015

President Obama. Well, I want to welcome His Highness, the Amir of Qatar, for his first visit to the Oval Office in his current position.

The United States and Qatar have a very strong security relationship. They are hosts to our men and women in uniform. They are partners with us on a whole range of security initiatives. And we also have an extraordinary set of ties that are commercial, educational, scientific, technological. And those benefit Qatar; they benefit the United States. They create jobs in both countries. And Qatar is a major investor here in the United States as well.

We've had a wide-ranging conversation on a host of regional issues. Qatar is a strong part-

ner in our coalition to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. And I expressed my appreciation to His Highness for the work that they've done in coordinating with other members of this coalition.

We are both committed to making sure that ISIL is defeated. We're both committed to making sure that in Iraq there is a opportunity for all people in that country—Sunni, Shia, and Kurd—to live together in peace.

We both are deeply concerned about the situation in Syria. We'll continue to support the moderate opposition there and continue to believe that it will not be able—possible to fully stabilize that country until Mr. Asad, who has

lost legitimacy in the country, is transitioned out. How we get there obviously is a source of extraordinary challenge, and we shared ideas in terms of how that can be accomplished.

We also had an opportunity to discuss a wide range of other areas where there's significant turmoil: Libya, Yemen. And I think had a significant meeting of the minds in our shared belief that the more that we can work with all the countries in the region to try to find political solutions to problems, the more that we can reduce sectarian tensions in the regions and isolate violent extremists, the more effective we can be.

And we also had a very useful discussion around Iran and the negotiations that are currently taking place to try to reduce the possibility of Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon. Those negotiations are ongoing. I gave the Amir an update and assured him that our goal here is to be able to verify that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon and that we will continue to press Iran on some of its other actions in the region that often have a destabilizing effect, recognizing, however, that we would greatly prefer to be able to resolve many of these issues diplomatically. And I know that Doha shares the same view.

So overall, I want to say that this was an excellent conversation, and I think His Highness has a deeper understanding of the United States concerns around these issues and our interests. I emphasized to him that ultimately what the United States wants to see for all of the Middle East and all of North Africa is circumstances in which peace and security prevail and that people—particularly young people—have the opportunity to learn, to get educated, and to succeed in this modern economy.

Qatar is an extraordinary example of that, partly because it's been blessed by natural resources, but also because it's made good decisions about how to develop its economy. And hopefully, that kind of prosperity can be spread more widely in the years to come, and I look forward to being a partner with Qatar in making that happen.

So, Your Highness, thank you very much. Welcome.

Q. [Inaudible]

President Obama. Hold on a second.

Amir Tamim. In Arabic or English?

President Obama. Whatever you prefer.

Amir Tamim. Anyway, Mr. President, thank you very much for having me at the White House. I'm very happy to be here. I'm not going to repeat what you said, Mr. President, but things that I really want to say is how important the relation between Qatar and the United States of America and how to develop the strategic relation that we have. You mentioned that we have a strong relation in military and security, and also we have an excellent relation in education as well—and other things as well.

As we mentioned before that we are investing in this country. We believe in the economy of this country and the future of this country. So this is something very important as well for us.

We are all concerned on what's going on in our region. You mentioned the countries that we spoke about. Yes, we are concerned about it. We are concerned, as well, about the terrorist groups in our region. We—I think we all share the same view: the reason why those terrorist groups are growing in our region. And we have to make sure that to solve this problem we are all fighting terrorism—and it's a must—is to make sure that the reason why this happened doesn't happen again, because it happened a few years ago, and it's happening again now.

We mentioned about the situation in Palestine and about the peace process and what is the best for Palestine. And it is an—it is the important subject in the Middle East, and we have to find a solution for Palestine. And I'm happy to learn and to hear from you, Mr. President, that you are committed to find this peace process in Palestine.

I don't want to take—you mentioned everything, Mr. President, so thank you very much. I'm very happy to be here, sir.

President Obama. All right. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.