

The story of the Exodus—the signs and wonders that appeared when hope seemed lost, the Jewish people’s abiding belief that they would one day reach the Promised Land—has inspired countless generations over the years. It inspired Jewish families to hold fast to their faith, even during times of terrible persecution. It inspired young civil rights leaders as they marched across an Alabama bridge in search of their own Promised Land, half a century ago.

And it continues to inspire us today. Tonight my family will read the passage of the Haggadah that declares we must see ourselves as though we personally were liberated from

Egypt. The Exodus reminds us that progress has always come slow and the future has always been uncertain, but it also reminds there is always reason for hope.

Like the Israelites who Moses led out of slavery long ago, it is up to us to never lose faith in the better day that lies ahead. In our own country, we can continue our march toward a more perfect Union. Around the world, we can seek to extend the miracles of freedom and peace, prosperity and security, to more of God’s creation. And together, we can continue the hard but awesome work of *tikkun olam*, and do our part to repair the world.

From my family to yours, *Chag Sameach*.

Statement on the Observance of Easter

April 3, 2015

Michelle and I join our fellow Christians around the world in observing Good Friday and celebrating Easter this weekend. With humility and awe, we give thanks for the extraordinary sacrifice that Jesus made for our salvation. We rejoice in the triumph of the Resurrection. And we renew our commitment to live as He commanded: to love God with all our

heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. I look forward to continuing our celebration on Tuesday when I host our annual Easter prayer breakfast as we remember the teachings of Jesus in our daily lives, stand with those around the world who are persecuted for their faith, and pray for peace, justice, and freedom for all people.

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Garissa, Kenya

April 3, 2015

Michelle and I join the American people in expressing our horror and sadness at the reports coming out of Garissa, Kenya. Words cannot adequately condemn the terrorist atrocities that took place at Garissa University College, where innocent men and women were brazenly and brutally massacred. We join the world in mourning them, many of whom were students pursuing an education in the pursuit of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. They represented a brighter future for a region that has seen too much violence for far too long. We also commend the heroism of the responders who lost their lives in the selfless protection of the students and faculty.

I know firsthand the extraordinary resilience and fundamental decency of the people of Kenya. So I know that the people of Garissa and all of Kenya will grieve, but their determination to achieve a better and more secure future will not be deterred. And neither will the resolve of the United States. We will stand hand in hand with the Kenyan Government and people against the scourge of terrorism and in their efforts to bring communities together. This much is clear: The future of Kenya will not be defined by violence and terror; it will be shaped by young people like those at Garissa University College—by their talents, their hopes, and their achievements. This is a message I will relay to the Kenyan people when I visit Ke-

nya in July. Even at this difficult hour, the Kenyan people should know they have an unwavering friend and ally in the United States of America.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Designations for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge *April 3, 2015*

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

Pursuant to section 304(g)(1) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Public Law 96–487, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has revised the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and completed an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The revised CCP will guide the Service’s management of the refuge for the next 15 years.

Based on the best available science and extensive public comment, the Service’s preferred alternative recommends 12.28 million acres—including the Coastal Plain—for designation as wilderness. The Service also recommends four rivers—the Atigun, Hulahula, Kongakut, and Marsh Fork Canning—for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Service’s revised CCP and final EIS address a variety of needs, including preserving subsistence uses of local inhabitants, protecting fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, and ensuring opportunities for fish- and wildlife-dependent recreation and other public uses. The revised CCP also strengthens wildlife and habitat monitoring as well as the moni-

toring of public use of the refuge so as to better respond to changing conditions on the landscape, particularly those associated with climate change.

With these points in mind, and pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964, I am recommending that the Congress pass legislation making additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that the Service proposed as part of the revised CCP and final EIS for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This area is one of the most beautiful, undisturbed places in the world. It is a national treasure and should be permanently protected through legislation for future generations.

Attached is the letter of recommendation from the Secretary of the Interior and a map of the area.

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 President’s Weekly Address *April 4, 2015*

This week, together with our allies and partners, we reached a historic understanding with Iran, which, if fully implemented, will prevent it from obtaining a nuclear weapon and make our country, our allies, and our world safer.

This framework is the result of tough, principled diplomacy. It’s a good deal, a deal that meets our core objectives, including strict limitations on Iran’s program and cutting off every

pathway that Iran could take to develop a nuclear weapon.

This deal denies Iran the plutonium necessary to build a bomb. It shuts down Iran’s path to a bomb using enriched uranium. Iran has agreed that it will not stockpile the materials needed to build a weapon. Moreover, international inspectors will have unprecedented access to Iran’s nuclear program because Iran