

committed to a vision of peace of two states for two peoples, a demilitarized Palestinian state that recognizes the Jewish State.

I don't think that anyone should doubt Israel's determination to defend itself against terror and destruction, but neither should anyone doubt Israel's willingness to make peace with any of its neighbors that genuinely want to achieve peace with her. And I look forward to discussing with you practical ways in which we can lower the tension, increase stability, and move towards peace.

And finally, Mr. President, I want to thank you for your commitment to further bolstering Israel's security in the memorandum of understanding that we're discussing. Israel has shouldered a tremendous defense burden over the years, and we've done it with the generous assistance of the United States of America. And I want to express my appreciation to you and express the appreciation of the people of Israel to you for your efforts in this regard during our years of common service and what you are engaging in right now: how to bolster Israel's security, how to maintain Israel's qualitative mili-

tary edge so that Israel can, as you've often said, defend itself, by itself, against any threat.

So, for all of these reasons, I want to thank you again for your hospitality, but even more so for sustaining and strengthening the tremendous friendship and alliance between Israel and the United States of America.

President Obama. Good.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Obama. You're welcome. Good. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Anwar Abu Zaid, suspected gunman in the shooting at the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center in Amman, Jordan; and James Damon Creach and Lloyd "Carl" Fields, Jr., Department of State contractors who were killed in the shooting in Amman. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as ISIS.

Remarks at an Organizing for Action Summit November 9, 2015

The President. Hello, OFA! Well, everybody, give Jordan a big round of applause.

All right, everybody, sit down. Sit down. Settle down. This is a rowdy crowd, as usual.

It's always good to be with OFA. It's a little bit like coming home. And we've got folks from all across the country here, every walk of life. An exceptionally good-looking crowd. [*Laughter*] But it is wonderful to see all of you. I see some familiar faces. I see some people who I haven't seen before. So just a little refresher on how this came about.

It started 8 years ago, when people of all different backgrounds and political beliefs came together with a simple conviction: that people who love their country can change it. And on that campaign, we tried something different. We had to because you had a candidate named Barack Obama—[*laughter*]—who, when I look back at the pictures, I looked like I was 14 or

something. [*Laughter*] So, clearly, we weren't going to be able to run a conventional campaign. And because of my background, because of the work I had done as an organizer and helping put together voter registration drives, there was a bias on our part for grassroots action.

And so we put power in your hands. We organized. We had offices in every great corner of this country. It didn't matter whether it was a red State or a blue State. Everywhere we went, we said if there's just two volunteers or one volunteer who gets another one—[*laughter*]—then we're game. And we'll work with you.

And we trusted our volunteers with a simple set of organizing principles: respect people, empower people, include people, listen to people, find out what's on their minds, find out what's moving them—so that this wasn't a top-

down affair, but this was a bottom-up affair. And people could come up with their own ideas about how to get people involved and what to emphasize and how to organize themselves. And together, we created a movement for change that couldn't be denied.

Some of you were there from the very beginning. And all of you are heirs to that movement, including me. And I couldn't be prouder of what you've done and everything that you continue to do. Because there are now 250 Organizing for Action chapters across the country. We're training anywhere from 2,000 to 5,000 Organizing fellows every year with the skills that are required to make a difference. We're not telling them what issues they should care about. We're saying here are the tools you need for civic participation to help move the country in a better direction.

And when you all go back into your communities, you're not giving—you're not given marching orders from me or from Washington or anybody else, you figure out what's important in your communities, and you organize around it. You be the change that you want to come about.

And it's because of committed citizens like you that this country keeps moving forward. That's been the spirit of the entire 7 years that we've been here. Sometimes, people haven't reported on it. [*Laughter*] Sometimes, there's been so much obsession with the ins and outs of the legislative process here in Washington, or lack thereof, that folks don't realize all the work that has been taking place on the ground. But you've been part of that. You've been making it happen.

When we took office, we were losing 800,000 jobs a month, unemployment rate was going up to 10 percent. And over the last 5 years, 5½ years, our businesses have created more than 13.5 million new jobs, and the unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. That's work you did.

We were told we couldn't put new rules on Wall Street or more protections for consumers or ask the wealthiest of Americans to pay their fair share of taxes without crushing job growth. But we did it. And the stock market doubled.

And we've seen the longest streak of private sector job creation on record. That happened because of you.

When I took office, more than 15 percent of Americans went without the security of health insurance. And for the first time, because of you, more than 90 percent of Americans are now covered; more than 17 million people are able to get health insurance. Insurance companies can't discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions or charge women more just for being women. That all happened because of you.

We were told that if we did get health insurance passed, we'd be adding to the deficit; it would explode. [*Laughter*] Well, you know what, we've covered 17.6 million Americans so far. And in the process, the deficit has been cut by two-thirds. That's all thanks to you. That's what you did. That's why we've seen the longest streak of private sector job growth on record. That's why we've gotten the uninsured rolls down.

Same is true on energy policy. We were told we were going to be hopelessly addicted to foreign oil forever. Well, we've cut our oil imports by more than half; tripled the amount of wind energy, increased by 20 times the amount of solar energy; doubled clean energy overall—steady sources of good jobs that can't be outsourced. And we're also able to keep prices low for energy for families, while at the same time reducing the carbon emissions that create climate change.

American energy is booming, prices are falling, and we use less energy. Our—even as our economy is growing, America has cut our carbon pollution more than any other nation—advanced nation on Earth. Think about that. That's your accomplishments.

On foreign policy, our influence was waning when we came in, standing diminished. Today, America leads the world in confronting new threats: making sure Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon; making sure that we have smarter, stronger trade rules for the 21st century.

America is leading the world towards dealing with climate change in a serious way. Global action—one of the reasons the State

Department decided the Keystone pipeline would not serve the national interests. Approving that project would have undercut our global leadership. And we've got to lead by example. Because ultimately, if we're going to prevent large parts of the Earth from becoming not only inhospitable, but uninhabitable, then we're going to have to keep some fossil fuels in the ground rather than burn them. We're going to have to reduce the amount of dangerous pollution released in the skies. We're going to have to make sure that we develop the clean energy alternatives that are sustainable.

And as long as I'm President, and as long as you're out there organizing, America is going to hold ourselves to the same high standards with which we want to hold the rest of the world.

So here's the bottom line: Whether you are working on the high cost of college tuition or you are working at the grassroots to make sure that we've got commonsense gun safety laws that prevent the kinds of shootings that we see in so many parts of our country, you know we've got more work to do. You wouldn't be here if you didn't think we had more work to do. When the cynics tell us we can't change this country for the better, we know they're wrong. We've got proof. We've made those changes.

When people said marriage equality is not going to happen, it's now the reality in 50 States. "Don't ask, don't tell" is something that exist. [*Laughter*] American manufacturing: People were sure it was over; now it's growing, creating jobs. The American auto industry that was on the verge of collapse has come back, selling more cars and trucks than it has in more than a decade. Housing market healed. High school graduation rates hit 80 percent for the first time. We're welcoming DREAMers, telling them that they belong and that we welcome them. This is progress.

But you know we've got more work to do, because the progress isn't guaranteed. It's not inevitable. It's something that has to be fought for with discipline and persistence and hope instead of fear.

And that's where you come in. That's why your organizing skills are more important than ever. We've still got to keep rebuilding an economy that rewards hard work, and gives everybody—not just those at the top—a shot at success. And we had a good jobs report last week. Unemployment went down, wages are starting to go up the way they should. But we've got a lot of catching up to do because people—a lot of folks haven't gotten a raise in a very long time. We've got keep working to make sure that the hardest working Americans get a raise. We've got to make sure that women are getting paid the same as men for doing the same work that a man is doing.

On climate change, all the work that we've done on the clean power plant rule and doubling fuel-efficiency standards on cars, it's not going to be enough. We've got more to do. And we've got to educate our communities to understand that this is not a hopeless cause, but we have to take it seriously if we want to leave our kids a safe and prosperous and habitable planet.

We've still got to work—our work cut out for us to fix a broken immigration system. At a time when we've got so many people playing on anti-immigrant fears, we've got to remind people that this is a nation of immigrants. That's how this country got built. And by the way, those immigrants were from everywhere. I was—there was a beautiful—I'm trying to remember what magazine I saw it, but they had a picture of immigrants from Ellis Island. And this was from the 1800s, early 1900s, and you had folks from Sweden and Bulgaria, and they were all in their native outfits. And the—they didn't look like—they did not look as if they had just hopped off a jet and were all spruced up. I mean, they were strivers, but they were escaping poverty and in search of a better life. And a lot of them didn't have great educations, but they knew that if they were able to get here, that their kids would have a great education.

The notion that somehow this generation of immigrants is different than the past is just not true. The only thing that's happened is, is just we forgot where we came from. You know?

We're going to have to work hard to build a smarter, fairer criminal justice system. We've got to work hard to make sure our kids are safe from the mayhem of gun violence, tell them their lives do matter.

None of this unfinished business will be completed in the next 14, 15 months. It's not going to be completed within my Presidency or the next or the Presidency after that. But that's the thing about America: The task of perfecting our Union is never complete.

But, OFA, understand this: I may only hold this office for another 14 months, but I'm not going anywhere. I am—I will still hold the most important office in our democracy, and that's the office of citizen. And the only that's going to be happening is, is that I'll get a chance to visit you more often because I won't have—it won't be such a hassle for me to move around. You know? [Laughter]

The point is, when I ran for this office, I did not say: "Yes, I can. Just leave it to me." [Laughter] What did I say?

Audience members. Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can. Our unfinished business does not depend solely on me or on a Member of Congress or the next President we elect. It depends on us: what we, the people, can do together.

And that's something that I'm going to be focusing on in my final year in office: the idea of an active, involved, engaged citizenship. That's what I'm going to be focused on after I

leave office: an engaged, active, focused citizenship.

So, if you want to help me, OFA—

Audience member. We do.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. —I need you to stay involved. I need you stay active. I need you to recruit other citizens. We've got to keep organizing. We've got to keep mobilizing. We've got to lift up issues we care about. We have to pursue referenda and ballot initiatives that can move this country forward. We've got to get organized at the State and local levels. We've got to inform people about the issues before they vote on them. We've got to make sure they turn out to vote. We've got to make sure they know where their leaders stand. If their leaders don't stand in a tenable position, we need to get new leaders.

We need to keep fighting to make sure that this country is one where it doesn't matter what you look like or where you come from, who you love, you can make it if you try. That's what you're all about. I am so proud of all of you. I'm so proud to be standing with you and marching with you. And I'm going to keep on going as long as you'll have me. All right?

Thank you, OFA. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. at the St. Regis Washington, DC hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jordan Scruggs, volunteer, Organizing for Action.

Remarks at an Organizing for Action Dinner November 9, 2015

The President. I've got to sign Trina's remarks here real quick. Everybody, have a seat while I'm doing this. [Laughter]

How's it going, everybody? Well, listen, I just gave a big speech, so I'm not going to give a long one here. Usually, in these kinds of settings, I may give some brief remarks at the top, and then the press will leave, and I'll be able to do a little bit of Q&A.

But I just want everybody to know that when I listen to Trina, I am reminded of why I got into politics. Because I was raised by a sin-

gle mom, and she was somebody who was unlikely to be involved in activism of any sort, grew up in a small Kansas town, and then, her parents moved to Seattle. Had a baby when she was only 18 years old, but ultimately, ended up being involved in development in poor countries and women's empowerment and giving them microloans to start their own businesses. And taught me so much about what was important and the values that I care about and the belief that if you empower people, if you give them the tools, then they can do