

struggle to rise out of their status as second-class citizens. They are denied opportunities for full economic and political participation. Some are forced to marry and have children when they are still children themselves, while abusive practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting, still persist in too many places. Moreover, secondary education—arguably the most powerful tool for helping girls escape cycles of poverty and abuse and take control of their lives—remains beyond the reach of tens of millions of girls around the world.

That is why I am proud that my administration launched the “Let Girls Learn” initiative, which is already helping adolescent girls around the world to surmount the barriers that

stand between them and a quality education. It is also why I am pleased to announce that, in the coming days, Secretary of State John Kerry will be releasing the U.S. Global Strategy To Empower Adolescent Girls, which lays out a whole-of-Government approach to provide the next generation of women the tools they need to pursue their aspirations.

We know that when we invest in women and girls, we are not only helping them, we are helping the entire planet. A future in which all women and girls around the world are allowed to rise and achieve their full potential will be a brighter, more peaceful, and more prosperous future for us all.

Statement on the Vermont Legislature’s Passage of Legislation Requiring Employers To Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees

March 9, 2016

I commend Governor Peter Shumlin and the State of Vermont for taking action to provide paid sick leave for Vermont’s working families. This action means thousands of families will no longer have to choose between losing income and taking care of a sick child. It’s a choice no one should have to make. So I’m once again calling on Congress to help us catch

up with other advanced nations and provide this basic security to all Americans. Until Congress acts, I urge other States to follow Vermont’s lead. And I’ll continue to do everything I can as President to support working families, because it’s the right thing to do to give everyone a fair shot to get ahead.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

March 9, 2016

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared on

March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2016.

On July 14, 2015, the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the European Union, and Iran reached a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to ensure that Iran’s nuclear program is and will remain exclusively peaceful. January 16, 2016, marked Implementation Day under the JCPOA, when the International Atomic Energy Agency issued a report verifying that Iran had completed key nuclear-related steps as specified in the JCPOA, and the

Secretary of State confirmed the report's findings. As a result, the United States lifted nuclear-related sanctions on Iran consistent with its commitments under the JCPOA, including the termination of a number of Executive Orders that were issued pursuant to this national emergency. Though such lifting of nuclear-related sanctions constitutes a significant change in our sanctions posture, non-nuclear related sanctions remain in place.

Nevertheless, certain actions and policies of the Government of Iran are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy,

and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and to maintain in force certain sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, 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 at a Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada

March 10, 2016

President Obama. Good morning, everybody.

Audience members. Good morning!

President Obama. *Bonjour.* On behalf of the American people, on behalf of Michelle and myself, it is my honor to welcome to the United States Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Mrs. Grégoire-Trudeau, their beautiful children, and the quite good-looking Canadian delegation.

It's long been said that you can choose your friends, but you cannot choose your neighbors. [Laughter] Well, by virtue of geography, the United States and Canada are blessed to be neighbors. And by choice, we are steadfast allies and the closest of friends. The truth is, though, we don't express this enough, in part because of our national characters. Our Canadian friends can be more reserved, more easy-going. We Americans can be a little louder, more boisterous. And as a result, we haven't always conveyed how much we treasure our alliance and our ties with our Canadian friends. And that's why, today, we are very proud to welcome the first official visit by a Canadian Prime Minister in nearly 20 years. It's about time, eh? [Laughter]

And what a beautiful day it is, which is a little unfair. As President, my very first foreign

trip was to Canada: to Ottawa in February. [Laughter] In the snow. Still, our friends from the great white north gave me a very warm welcome. Mr. Prime Minister, we hope to reciprocate some of that warmth today, with your first official visit south of the border.

We're joined today by proud Canadian Americans. We are family. And this is also a special day for the many Canadians who live and work here in America and who enrich our lives every day. We don't always realize it, but so often, that neighbor, that coworker, that member of the White House staff, some of our favorite artists and performers, they're Canadian! [Laughter] They sneak up on you. [Laughter]

Even as we remember what makes us unique, Americans and Canadians, we see ourselves in each other. We're guided by the same values, including our conviction that the blessings we cherish as free people are not gifts to be taken for granted, but are precious freedoms that have to be defended anew by every generation. Americans and Canadians—our brave men and women in uniform—have paid the price together across a century of sacrifice, from the poppy fields of Flanders to the rugged mountains of Afghanistan. As NATO allies, we stand united against terrorism and for the