

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Under the Treaty, the Parties agree to assist each other by, among other things: producing evidence (such as testimony, documents, or items) obtained voluntarily or, where necessary, by compulsion; arranging for persons, including persons in custody, to travel to another country to provide evidence; serving documents; executing searches and seizures; locating and identifying persons or items; and freezing and forfeiting

assets or property that may be the proceeds or instrumentalities of crime.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
March 17, 2016.

The President's Weekly Address

March 19, 2016

Hi, everybody. One of the most consequential responsibilities our Constitution grants a President is appointing a Supreme Court Justice. The men and women who sit on the Supreme Court safeguard our rights. They ensure that ours is a system of laws, not of men. And they're given the essential task of applying the principles written into our founding documents to the most challenging questions of today.

So this is a duty I take very seriously. It requires me to set aside short-term politics in order to maintain faith with our Founders. And on Wednesday, after weeks of consultations with Republicans, Democrats, and leaders across the country, I selected a nominee whose unmatched experience and integrity have earned him the respect and admiration of both parties: Chief Judge Merrick Garland.

Judge Garland grew up in my hometown of Chicago, with parents who taught him to work hard and deal fairly. As a young lawyer, he left a lucrative private firm to work for half as much in public service. Eventually, he oversaw the Federal response to the Oklahoma City bombing, working side by side with first responders, victims, and their families to bring justice for an unspeakable crime. And everywhere he went during that investigation, he carried with him in his briefcase the program from the memorial service with each of the victims' names inside.

For the last 19 years, Judge Garland has served on what's known as the second highest

court in the land—the DC Circuit Court—including the last 3 years as Chief Judge. On the bench, he's shown a dedication to protecting our basic rights; a conviction that powerful voices must not be allowed to drown out those of everyday Americans; an understanding that justice isn't simply abstract legal theory, it affects people's daily lives; and a spirit of decency, modesty, and evenhandedness in his work. Judge Garland is admired for his courtesy, his devotion to family, and his civic-mindedness. For the past 18 years, he's served as a tutor for young students at a local DC elementary school.

During my time as President, through three separate Supreme Court appointments, in conversations with Republicans and Democrats alike, one name came up more than any other: Merrick Garland.

I understand that we're in the middle of an especially noisy and volatile political season. But at a time when our politics are so polarized, when norms and customs of our political rhetoric seem to be corroding, this is precisely the time we should treat the appointment of a Supreme Court justice with the seriousness it deserves. Because our Supreme Court is supposed to be above politics, not an extension of politics. And it should stay that way.

So I ask Republicans in the Senate to give Judge Garland the respect he has earned. Give him a hearing. Give him an up-or-down vote. To deny it would be an abdication of the Senate's constitutional duty. It would indicate a

process for nominating and confirming judges that is beyond repair. It would make it increasingly impossible for any President, Republican or Democrat, to carry out their constitutional function. To go down that path would jeopardize our system of justice, it would hurt our democracy, and it would betray the vision of our founding.

I've fulfilled my constitutional duty. Now it's time for Senators to do theirs. I hope that they take the time to reflect on the importance of this process to our country. I hope that they'll act fairly. And I hope they'll work in a bipartisan fashion to confirm Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. That's how we can uphold our pledge to liberty and justice for all, for our time and for generations to come.

Remarks to United States Embassy Personnel and Families in Havana, Cuba March 20, 2016

The President. Thank you. *Muchas gracias.* Hello! Well, it's so good to see everybody. Thank you. Hello, everybody.

Audience members. Hi!

The President. Well, as our Ambassador—or Chief of Mission just stated, the—it's been nearly 90 years since a U.S. President stepped foot in Cuba. It is wonderful to be here.

Back in 1928, President Coolidge came on a battleship. It took him 3 days to get here. It only took me 3 hours. [*Laughter*] For the first time ever, Air Force One has landed in Cuba, and this is our very first stop. So this is a historic visit, and it's a historic opportunity to engage directly with the Cuban people and to forge new agreements and commercial deals, to build new ties between our two peoples, and for me to lay out my vision for a future that's brighter than our past.

Michelle and I wanted to start with all of you because nothing symbolizes better the new relationship between the United States and the Cuban people. For the first time in more than half a century, as Jeff just noted, the American flag flies over a reopened U.S. Embassy. And having a U.S. Embassy here means that we're able to more effectively advance our interests

Thanks, everybody. And have a good weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:05 p.m. on March 18 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on March 19. In the address, the President referred to Shirley Garland, mother of Supreme Court Associate Justice-designate Merrick B. Garland; and Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor and Elena Kagan. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 18, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 19. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

and our values and understand the Cuban people and their concerns.

I want to thank the outstanding leadership team that's here, especially our outstanding Ambassador, Jeff DeLaurentis, and his wonderful wife Jennifer. Give them a big round of applause. As well as DCM Scott Hamilton and his wife Isabel. Give them a big round of applause. Yay!

But most of all, I want to thank all of you, who embody the spirit of friendship and partnership that brings us together today. We've got a lot of proud Americans here, but we also have a lot of proud Cubans. So, *como andan?* [*Laughter*]

I want to mention three of our Cuban friends who have been a part of your work for decades, including all those years when we only had an Interest Section here: a guard for 30 years, Carlos Flores; in our visa section, Caridad Castellanos; and a dedicated driver for almost 40 years, Francisco Camargo. Yay!

So I know it's been a pretty busy 7 months. You've had to stand up America's newest Embassy, you've helped support high-profile visitors from across the administration and the business community and now me and Michelle. And I know your workload is a lot heavier than it was, but I want you to know