

focused on destroying ISIL. A majority of the nations who came here are part of our global coalition against ISIL. A number of our countries have been targeted by ISIL. Just about all our nations have seen citizens travel to join ISIL in Syria and Iraq.

In Syria and Iraq, ISIL continues to lose ground. Our coalition continues to take out its leaders, including those planning terrorist attacks against our countries. They're losing their oil infrastructure and revenues. Their morale is suffering.

As ISIL is squeezed in Syria and Iraq, it's lashing out elsewhere, as we've seen most recently—and tragically—from Turkey to Brussels. And during our summit, we focused on ways to step up our efforts to disrupt terrorist attacks. It requires even more cooperation to prevent the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and sharing more information and intelligence. That's why I invited all the nations represented at this summit to join us in a broader discussion among our intelligence and security services on how we can improve information sharing to prevent terrorist attacks.

This continues to be a difficult fight. But every day, our dedicated professionals—military, diplomatic, intelligence, counterterrorism, homeland security, law enforcement, and nuclear experts—are working to protect us. Because of the progress we made this week and over recent years, more of the world's nuclear material is secure. It's harder for terrorists to get at it. And as Commander in Chief, I want you to know that we're going to keep doing everything in our power to keep our Nation safe and strong and free.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:30 p.m. on April 1 in Room 152B of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center for broadcast on April 2. In the address, the President referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 2. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

April 4, 2016

The President. It's a great pleasure to welcome back once again my good friend, the Secretary General of NATO, Secretary General Stoltenberg. We are marking the 67th anniversary of the NATO alliance, and NATO continues to be the linchpin, the cornerstone of our collective defense and U.S. security policy.

We had an excellent meeting that started with marking the tragedy that had taken place in Brussels and reinforcing the importance of us staying focused on ISIL and countering the terrorism that has seeped up into Europe and around the world.

And we agreed that one of the most important functions that NATO is performing and can continue to perform is to help in the training and assisting process for troops in Iraq, in Jordan, in many of the areas in the region. And

we are continuing to cooperate on an ongoing basis about operations potentially in areas like Libya, where you have the beginnings of a government, and we can, I think, provide enormous help in helping to stabilize those countries.

We also discussed generally what's been happening in the southern flank of NATO. Traditionally, a lot of focus has been on the east, but we recognize that there are a broad set of challenges that have to be addressed all around the world. And NATO is going to be working with the European Union, for example, to help prevent the tragedies that we saw last summer of migrants taking very dangerous trips across waters to try to reach Europe. In cooperation with Turkey, Greece, and other countries, it's important for us to do that in a

way that is humane and thoughtful, even as we're also working together to try to bring an end to the Syrian conflict.

We had an excellent conversation about Afghanistan, in which NATO obviously has been an extraordinary partner with the United States. The coalition there continues to focus on assisting the Government and the Afghan national security forces in building up capacity, pushing back against the Taliban, and helping to—helping Afghans to provide security for their own country and, hopefully, being able to arrive at some sort of political settlement that would end decades of conflict and violence there. And we are grateful for the sacrifices that NATO countries have made. Their men and women have fought alongside U.S. troops. They have fought together, and they've died together. And in the Warsaw summit that is coming up, we expect to be able to follow through on the pledges that we've made to continue to support the Afghan people in those efforts.

And we discussed the eastern side of the equation. We continue to be united in supporting Ukraine in the wake of Russian incursions into Ukrainian territory. We continue to work in a training-and-assist fashion in helping support Ukraine develop its military capabilities defensively. We continue to provide reassurance to the frontline states there, our NATO allies, to make sure that they have not just reassurance of words, but that we have actually deployed concrete assets that let them know that article 5 means something and that we stand by our commitments to our allies. And I have in my budget put forward a quadrupling of the resources that we spend and dedicated a portion of that money to make sure that we've got ground brigades that send a clear message about our commitments to our NATO allies to the east.

That does not mean that we are not continuing to work with Russia to try to find resolution to the problems in Ukraine. We think it is important to maintain a dialogue, and NATO has continued to consult with Russia and, in very transparent fashion, indicate the firmness of our resolve to protect our values and our allies,

but also our interest in being able to reduce tensions and the dangers of potential escalation.

So I just want to state how effective I think Secretary General Stoltenberg has been in managing a whole range of challenges. This is obviously a tumultuous time in the world. Europe is a focal point of a lot of these stresses and strains in the global security system. We are lucky to have a strong NATO Secretary General and a strong team that is such an excellent partner with us.

And it is because of the strength of NATO and the transatlantic partnership, this transatlantic alliance, that I'm confident that, despite these choppy waters, we will be able to continue to underscore and underwrite the peace and security and prosperity that has been the hallmark of the transatlantic relationship for so many decades. Jens.

Secretary General Stoltenberg. Thank you so much, Mr. President. It's always an honor to be here and especially on a day like this, because, as you said, today is the anniversary of our alliance; NATO was founded in this very city.

And that NATO is as important as ever, because NATO has been able to adapt to a more dangerous world, not least because of your personal commitment and your personal leadership, and we are very grateful for that.

We stand together in the fight against terrorism. Terrorism affects us all, from Brussels to San Bernardino, and all NATO allies contribute to the U.S.-led efforts to degrade and destroy ISIL. And just last week, we started training all the Iraqi officers, and we will continue to support the efforts of the United States and other countries to fight ISIL.

We also discussed how NATO can increase our support to other countries in the region and ensure and enable them to stabilize their own countries and to fight ISIL, and therefore, different ways of building local capacity is high on our agenda in NATO.

We welcome the progress we have seen in Libya when it comes to establishing a Government of national accord, and NATO stands

ready to provide support to the new Government in Libya.

We also addressed the migrant and the refugee crisis in Europe. NATO assists—helped the European Union, Turkey, Greece to handle the situation in the Aegean Sea, and NATO has deployed ships in the Aegean Sea.

Afghanistan is high on our agenda. Afghanistan is our biggest military operation ever. And it shows the importance of unity in North America and Europe, because our military operation in Afghanistan is a direct response to the terrorist attack against the United States on 9/11. And European, Canadian soldiers has fought together with their—with the American soldiers in Afghanistan for many, many years.

We are also responding to a more assertive Russia, responsible for aggressive actions in Ukraine. And I very much welcome, again, the leadership that you have shown in increasing our collective defense in Europe with the European Reassurance Initiative, which is, as you've proposed, going to be quadrupled in the budget you have proposed for the Congress.

This is really a strong example of the transatlantic bond, how the United States is impor-

tant for the security of Europe and also over European allies—or the European allies are also stepping up, so together, we are now implementing the biggest reinforcement to our collective defense since the end of the cold war.

I will work together with all the NATO allies to make sure that they make good on the pledge they made together to increase defense spending. And this is about that we have to invest more in our security when tensions increases, and therefore, we have to make sure that we do what we promised, and that is to invest more in defense in the following years.

We will meet again in Warsaw at our summit. We have a lot to do, but I'm certain that we are—that we will deliver, because we have seen time and again that North America and Europe is able to deliver when we stand together in a strong NATO alliance.

So thank you once again for having me here. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the New York Legislature's Passage of Legislation To Raise the Minimum Wage and Require Employers To Provide Paid Family Leave to Employees

April 4, 2016

I commend Governor Andrew Cuomo and the State of New York for taking the historic step of creating a paid family leave program in the State and raising its minimum wage to support New York's working families. This action means more parents won't have to choose between their job and caring for their new children. It means more workers can earn a higher wage to help make ends meet. Since I first

called on Congress to increase the Federal minimum wage in 2013, 18 States and more than 40 cities and counties have acted on their own, thanks to the strong leadership of elected officials, businesses, and workers who organized and fought so hard for the economic security families deserve. Now Congress needs to act to raise the Federal minimum wage and expand access to paid leave for all Americans.