

our State of Nebraska, and after high school joined our military, served with our elite special forces, and ultimately gave his life for our Nation. His mother said, "He is a son of the Lao people." And he sacrificed for us, and we honor him.

We're connected by Channapha Khamvongsa, who came to America when she was 7 years old and who is back here today. And for years, she urged the United States to do more to help remove unexploded bombs here in Laos. "There are many, many problems in this world that might not be able to be solved in a lifetime," she's said, but this is one we can fix. So, Channapha, we thank you for working to fix this problem.

And we're connected by Stacey Phengvath, who is here as well and who I met earlier. Her parents came to America and stressed the importance of education. And today, this proud Laotian American serves at our Embassy here in Laos. "I feel a sense of home," she says, "as if I have known this country before, through my parents." It feels "like we've come full circle." So, Stacey, on behalf of all of us, thank you for helping to bring our countries closer together.

So these are the values that guide us. And this is the partnership that America offers here in Laos and across the Asia-Pacific: respect for

your sovereignty, security and peace through cooperation, investment in the health of children, education for students, support for entrepreneurs, development and trade that creates jobs for all of us and protects our environment, a commitment to rights and dignity that is borne out of our common humanity.

This is our vision. This is the future we can realize together. And based on my visit to Laos and the proud work of the past 8 years, I believe that Americans and the peoples of the Asia-Pacific will be able to say to each other, as the song goes, "we will always have you as our true friend as long as we live." *Khop jai lai lai*. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the main auditorium of Lao National Cultural Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Pom Khampradith, director of the Pacific Northwest chapter, Lao Heritage Foundation; Sengchanh Douangdara, mother of PO1 John Douangdara, USN, who was killed in action in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, on August 8, 2011; Channapha Khamvongsa, executive director, Legacies of War; and Stacey Phengvath, office management specialist, U.S. Embassy in Vientiane.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Park Geun-hye of South Korea in Vientiane September 6, 2016

President Obama. It is always a pleasure to meet with my friend and partner, President Park of the Republic of Korea, and her delegation. As we all know, the R.O.K. is one of America's oldest and closest allies. Our alliance remains the linchpin of peace and security, not just on the Korean Peninsula, but across the region.

In recent years, we've worked together to strengthen our alliance and to ensure our readiness against any threat. For instance, our missile defense cooperation, THAAD, is a purely

defensive system to deter and defend against North Korean threats. And today I want to reaffirm that our commitment to the defense and security of North [South]^o Korea, including extended deterrence, is unwavering.

We had extensive discussions about the recent provocations by the D.P.R.K., and we are united in condemning North Korea's continued missile launches, including this week while China was hosting the G-20. These launches are provocative. They're a violation of North Korea's obligations internationally. Its nuclear

^o White House correction.

and missile programs are a threat to not only the R.O.K., but to Japan, other allies in the region, partners in the region, and to the United States.

So we are going to work diligently together with the most recent U.N. sanctions that are already placing North Korea under the most intense sanctions regime ever. We're going to work together to make sure that we're closing loopholes and making them even more effective. And President Park and I agree that the entire international community needs to implement these sanctions fully and hold North Korea accountable.

North Korea needs to know that provocations will only invite more pressure and further deepen its isolation, but that if it is willing to recognize its international obligations and the importance of denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula, the opportunities for us to dialogue with them are there. And we do not have any interest in an offensive approach to North Korea. We want peace and security for all peoples, but their current behavior has not been ones that are conducive to the kinds of dialogue and diplomacy that both the R.O.K. and the United States would prefer.

Beyond the region, our alliance is a global one. We stand together against ISIL. We stand together in providing humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people and for refugees, promoting global health, and fighting climate change. The R.O.K. has been an excellent partner in helping Afghanistan stabilize. It has been an outstanding partner on global health and security issues. We talked about the leadership summit that we'll be hosting at the end of this month on refugees and the important contributions that the Republic of Korea are making.

And let me just say that as I wrap up over the next several days my last trip to Asia, what a pleasure it's been to work with President Park and her team. They have been steady, consistent partners, and President Park has been a stalwart ally and friend on a whole range of issues. And her steady and wise leadership, I think, has greatly contributed to the strengthening of what was already one of our most im-

portant alliances. So I want to thank her personally for the excellent contributions she's made to advancing all the various issues that we've been working on. And I want to thank her team as well that worked very hard behind the scenes to make that happen.

President Park. Today I met with President Obama and held fruitful discussions on how we will respond to the common challenges that confront both our nations. In particular, it was a pleasure to reconfirm that the Korea-U.S. alliance is stronger than ever and is playing a pivotal role for the peace and stability of not only the Korean Peninsula, but the entire region.

North Korea's nuclear test earlier this year and continued missile launches are fundamentally threatening the security of both the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. I would like to make it clear that Korea and the U.S. will respond resolutely to any provocations by North Korea by utilizing all means.

North Korea launched another missiles again yesterday. I send a stern warning that the continuation of such reckless provocations will lead North Korea down the path of self-destruction. I express my gratitude to President Obama once again for clearly expressing today the unwavering commitment of the U.S. for the defense of the Republic of Korea. President Obama and I have agreed to maintain a strong deterrence posture by enhancing our combined defense capabilities, to include the deployment of the THAAD system.

Next, the faithful implementation of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 2270 is vital to deterring North Korea's advancement of its nuclear and missile capabilities, and it is meaningful that our two countries have been engaged in close cooperation in this regard. The United States and Korea have agreed to faithfully implement U.N. Security Council resolutions and further strengthen our efforts to seal the loopholes and sanctions implementation even more tightly. Taking into consideration the importance of China's role in effective implementation of sanctions and the resolution process of the North Korean nuclear issue, our two countries have agreed to continue to communicate with China through various channels.

Regarding the human rights situation of North Korean people, I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts made by many in the United States, both in and out of government. And I plan to further strengthen cooperation with the United States and the international community on the basis of our North Korean Human Rights Act, which entered into force on September 4. The improvement of the human rights situation for North Korean people will be a critical stepping stone for our path toward unification, and unification will provide opportunities for North Korean people to be treated equally.

Lastly, in order for the Korea-U.S. alliance to contribute to a greater peace and broader prosperity, President and I have agreed to not only expand cooperation in new frontiers such as global health, climate change, and space,

but also expand our roles in areas such as refugees, peacekeeping operations, and development cooperation. I find it meaningful that through our discussions today, I was able to confirm yet once again that the foundations of our bilateral relationship are rock solid.

I once again express my respect for President Obama, for the vision and leadership that he has shown for our alliance.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:01 p.m. at the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) antiballistic missile system; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. President Park spoke in Korean, and her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Memorandum on the Emergency Leave Transfer Program for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Severe Storms and Flooding in Louisiana *September 6, 2016*

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Emergency Leave Transfer Program for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Severe Storms and Flooding in Louisiana

I am deeply saddened by the devastating losses caused by the severe storms and historic flooding in Louisiana. The Federal Government has mobilized its resources to support Louisiana in response to and recovery from this major disaster. While Federal departments and agencies rally their capabilities to support these efforts, many of those same Federal employees are personally impacted by the storms in Louisiana and are dealing with overwhelming personal losses.

To further assist Federal employees and their family members adversely affected by the severe storms and flooding in Louisiana of August 2016, I hereby direct the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 6391. The program will permit employees in the executive and judicial branches, or an agency leave bank established under 5 U.S.C. 6363, to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies (or the judicial branch) who were adversely affected by the severe storms and flooding in Louisiana and who need additional time off for recovery. I further direct OPM to provide additional guidance to agencies on the program's administration.

BARACK OBAMA