

Remarks on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change October 5, 2016

Good afternoon, everybody. Today is a historic day in the fight to protect our planet for future generations.

Ten months ago, in Paris, I said before the world that we needed a strong global agreement to reduce carbon pollution and to set the world on a low-carbon course. The result was the Paris Agreement. Last month, the United States and China, the world's two largest economies and largest emitters, formally joined that agreement together. And today the world has officially crossed the threshold for the Paris Agreement to take effect.

Today the world meets the moment. And if we follow through on the commitments that this Paris Agreement embodies, history may well judge it as a turning point for our planet.

Of course, it took a long time to reach this day. One of the reasons I ran for this office was to make America a leader in this mission. And over the past 8 years, we've done just that. In 2009, we salvaged a chaotic climate summit in Copenhagen, establishing the principle that all nations have a role to play in combating climate change. And at home, we led by example, with historic investments in growing industries like wind and solar that created a steady stream of new jobs. We set the first-ever nationwide standards to limit the amount of carbon pollution that power plants can dump into the air our children breathe. From the cars and trucks we drive to the homes and businesses in which we live and work, we've changed, fundamentally, the way we consume energy.

Now, keep in mind, the skeptics said these actions would kill jobs. And instead, we saw, even as we were bringing down these carbon levels, the longest streak of job creation in American history. We drove economic output to new highs. And we drove our carbon pollution to its lowest levels in two decades.

We continued to lead by example with our historic joint announcement with China 2 years ago, where we put forward even more

ambitious climate targets. And that achievement encouraged dozens of other countries to set more ambitious climate targets of their own. And that, in turn, paved the way for our success in Paris: the idea that no nation, not even one as powerful as ours, can solve this challenge alone. All of us have to solve it together.

Now, the Paris Agreement alone will not solve the climate crisis. Even if we meet every target embodied in the agreement, we'll only get to part of where we need to go. But make no mistake: This agreement will help delay or avoid some of the worst consequences of climate change. It will help other nations ratchet down their dangerous carbon emissions over time, and set bolder targets as technology advances, all under a strong system of transparency that allows each nation to evaluate the progress of all other nations. And by sending a signal that this is going to be our future—a clean energy future—it opens up the floodgates for businesses and scientists and engineers to unleash high-tech, low-carbon investment and innovation at a scale that we've never seen before. So this gives us the best possible shot to save the one planet we've got.

I know diplomacy can be [isn't always][°] easy and progress on the world stage can sometimes be slow. But together, with steady, persistent effort, with strong, principled American leadership, with optimism and faith and hope, we're proving that it is possible.

And I want to embarrass my Senior Adviser, Brian Deese, who is standing right over there, because he worked tirelessly to make this deal possible. He and John Kerry, Gina McCarthy at the EPA, everybody on their teams have done an extraordinary job to get us to this point, and America should be as proud of them as I am of them.

And I also want to thank the people of every nation that has moved quickly to bring the Paris Agreement into force. I encourage folks who

[°] White House correction.

have not yet submitted their documentation to enter into this agreement, to do so as soon as possible. And in the coming days, let's help finish additional agreements to limit aviation emissions, to phase down dangerous use of hydrofluorocarbons, all of which will help build a world that is safer and more prosperous and more secure and more free than the one that was left for us.

That's our most important mission: to make sure our kids and our grandkids have at least as beautiful a planet and, hopefully, even more beautiful, than the one that we had. And today I'm a little more confident that we can get the job done.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Honoring the 2016 Stanley Cup Champion Pittsburgh Penguins October 6, 2016

The President. It is wonderful to be here. Welcome to the White House! And we are here to celebrate an extraordinary achievement: Phil Kessel is a Stanley Cup Champion! [Laughter] Hey!

We've got some special guests in the house, some big fans who are Members of Congress. We've got NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman. Gary, I have to say, I respect Lord Stanley, but I'm going to need you to explain to me how something called the President's Trophy is the not highest award a team can win. [Laughter]

But we're actually making some history here today. I am proud to be the first President to welcome to the White House eight Cup-winning teams, all of whom are based in the United States. I reminded the Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau—who we had a state dinner here—about that not too long ago. And that, of course, includes this year's outstanding champions. Let's give it up for the Pittsburgh Penguins.

So this is a nice bookend to my Presidency because the first year, you guys won the Cup. Now you're coming back for my final year. A lot has changed during the interim. Back in 2009, my hair matched the color of the puck more than the ice. [Laughter] "Sid the Kid" was actually a kid. [Laughter] And Geno was still snapping pictures with a flip phone. [Laughter]

But what I like best about this team's victory is that no one thought they could pull it off. I obviously sympathize with that; they said the same thing about me. [Laughter] Mike Sullivan started the season coaching the minor league team in Wilkes-Barre and Scranton.

That's Biden country and Casey country. In late December, the Pens were closer to last place than first. Spirits were low. And when the team designed its 50th anniversary logo for the upcoming season, it referenced the franchise's three Cups because no one imagined they were about to win a fourth.

And then "GM of the Year" Jim Rutherford got to work. He was smart enough to see that Sullivan had coached in the Blackhawks organization, so he knew—[laughter]—he knew Sullivan brought a lot to the table. Goalie Matt Murray, a rookie, was a brick wall. The H-B-K line—none of whom were on the team last year—were so dominant that they earned their own sandwich at Primanti Brothers. [Laughter] The Pens went 14–2 down the stretch to finish second in the East.

[At this point, a baby cried.]

And then—don't worry, I don't have any more bad jokes. That poor thing. [Laughter] It's like, aww, these are so corny. [Laughter] Yes, I know. [Laughter]

And then they powered through three rounds, each tougher than the last, before taking care of the Sharks in six games, one of the most remarkable turnarounds in the history of the NHL.

Of course, leading the way was my fellow lefty, Sidney Crosby. Last time he was here, I took a cheap shot at Sid for his size. [Laughter] I wasn't the first one on or off the ice. Of course, since then, he's won two Olympic Golds, a World Championship, a World Cup