

that most American of ideals: to better ourselves and our families. We see it in our troops who serve far from home during this holiday season, these outstanding men and women who go into harm's way to protect the Nation that we love and the freedoms that we hold dear: the freedom to vote and speak out and practice our faiths as we choose, the freedom to chart our own course as citizens and as a nation.

That is the America that I've seen as we've come back from the depths of an economic crisis to an economy on the move, as we've recovered from wars and natural tragedies. What I've seen is a big-hearted and hopeful and resilient people who look out for each other and who have each other's backs and who find strength in our differences and who keep moving forward knowing that we're all in this together.

Those are our values. That is who we are. That's who we will always be. And this is the 94th time that Americans have gathered to light our national tree. It's the eighth and final time for our family. Before we leave tonight, I

just want to express what an incredible honor it has been to serve this Nation and to feel its warmth and to feel its generosity and how our family has been awed by America's goodness. And most of all, it has been so special to share these 8 years with all of you.

So, on behalf of Michelle and Malia, Sasha, Grandma—[laughter]—Bo, and Sunny, Merry Christmas, everybody. Happy holidays. May God bless you all, and may God bless these United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:41 p.m. on the Ellipse at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actor Eva J. Longoria; musicians Kelly B. Clarkson, Yolanda Y. Adams, Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, Chancelor J. "Chance the Rapper" Bennett, Marc Anthony, and James Taylor and his wife Kim; Dylan Carrejo, AmeriCorps alumnus, Texas Conservation Corps; Debra L. Haggins, university chaplain and pastor, Hampton University; and Simone Manuel, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary-General–Designate António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations

December 2, 2016

President Obama. It is a great pleasure for me to be able to welcome the Secretary-General-designate Guterres to the Oval Office. He will be assuming a post that obviously has enormous influence and impact around the world. The good news is that he has an extraordinary reputation as someone who has led multilateral organizations at the highest level and has done so in ways that everybody recognizes he's extraordinarily effective.

Most recently his work with the U.N. High Commission on Refugees has been applauded for its effectiveness, its efficiency, and his ability to really concretely help people who are in extraordinary need. And the fact that, I think, all of us were pleasantly surprised by how quickly a consensus was achieved around Mr.

Guterres's designation signifies the respect in which he's held all around the world.

From the perspective of the United States, the U.N. is a critical partner in almost everything that we do. It is a linchpin of the post-World War II order, and through Democratic and Republican administrations, our partnership with the United Nations has allowed us to help resolve conflicts, to provide development assistance where it's sorely needed, to tackle big transnational challenges like refugee flows or, more recently, like climate change. And at a time when those challenges are mounting and there's great uncertainty around the world, having an effective partner in the United Nations Secretary-General will be critically important.

So this meeting gives us an opportunity to share our ideas about where the Secretary-General-designate intends to take the U.N. and how the United States can work effectively with him.

I've emphasized to the current Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, how important the United States considers the U.N. but also how important it is, we believe, to make sure that the U.N. operates efficiently, that money is well spent, that we're doing everything we can to initiate the kinds of effective management practices that Mr. Guterres is known for, so that when we all have to be pinching pennies and being concerned about the needs around the world outstripping our resources, that the work we do in the U.N. is effective, concrete; that it's not just a forum for talking, but it's also a forum for doing.

And I have great confidence that our soon-to-be Secretary-General will be able to be an extraordinarily effective leader of that organization. And the United States looks forward to working with him.

So, congratulations and good luck.

Secretary-General-designate Guterres. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. My visit also is to express my total commitment to work closely with the United States, with the present administration, also with the next administration.

We live in a dangerous world. We are all aware of that. We have seen a multiplication of conflicts. Old conflicts seem never to die. And it's true, the international community has lost a lot of its capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts. On the other hand, globalization that has been an extremely important driver of economic growth, the reduction of poverty in many parts of the world has also left people behind. And this has been the cause of unrest and instability in many parts of the world.

And the human rights agenda that is so dear to us all, we also see many difficulties in relation to it, when national sovereignty sometimes tends to make it difficult for human rights to be effective and to be promoted.

Now, in all these areas, I believe that the leadership of United States is absolutely crucial. And in all these areas, I believe that we need a U.N. that is more effective, more cost effective, more able to serve the people with a very strong reform-minded approach. And the U.S. has always been a driver for reforming the U.N., and I'm deeply committed to pursue that objective to make sure that the U.N. can be a positive partner in the efforts that the U.S. is leading—[inaudible].

President Obama. Thank you again. Congratulations. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Report of the Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity December 2, 2016

In February of this year, I directed the creation of a nonpartisan Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity, charging it with assessing the current state of cybersecurity in our country and recommending bold, actionable steps that the Government, private sector, and the Nation as a whole can take to bolster cybersecurity in today's digital world. Yesterday the members of the Commission—leaders from industry and academia, many with experience in government—provided their findings and recommendations to me. And earlier today I met

with the Commission's Chair, Tom Donilon, to discuss how we as a country can build on the Commission's work and enhance our cybersecurity over the coming years. I want to thank the Commission members for their hard work and for their thoughtful and detailed recommendations. I am confident that if we implement the Commission's recommendations, our economy, critical infrastructure, and national security will be better equipped to thrive in the coming years.

The Commission's report makes clear that cybersecurity is one of the greatest challenges