

too. We call on the Syrian regime to do this urgently to alleviate the dire situation in Aleppo; and call on Russia and Iran to use their influence to help make this happen.

We urge all parties in Syria to adhere to international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. UN SG Ban Ki-moon has spoken about war crimes being committed in Syria. There must not be impunity for those responsible. We call on the UN to investigate respective reports and gather evidence to hold the perpetrators of war crimes to account. We are ready to consider additional restrictive measures against individuals and entities that act for or on behalf of the Syrian regime.

At the same time, Russia is blocking the UN Security Council, which is therefore unable to do its work and put an end to the atrocities. The regime's refusal to engage in a serious political process also highlights the unwillingness of both Russia and Iran to work for a political solution despite their assurances to the contrary. We support the efforts of the UN Special Envoy de Mistura to resume the political process through negotiations. Only a political settlement can bring peace for people in Syria.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Death of Former Senator John H. Glenn, Jr. December 8, 2016

When John Glenn blasted off from Cape Canaveral atop an Atlas rocket in 1962, he lifted the hopes of a nation. And when his *Friendship 7* spacecraft splashed down a few hours later, the first American to orbit the Earth reminded us that with courage and a spirit of discovery there's no limit to the heights we can reach together. With John's passing, our Nation has lost an icon, and Michelle and I have lost a friend. John spent his life breaking barriers, from defending our freedom as a decorated Marine Corps fighter pilot in World War II and Korea, to setting a transcontinental speed record, to becoming, at age 77, the oldest human to touch the stars. John always had the right stuff, inspiring generations of scientists, engineers, and astronauts who will take us to

Mars and beyond, not just to visit, but to stay. Today the people of Ohio remember a devoted public servant who represented his fellow Buckeyes in the U.S. Senate for a quarter century and who fought to keep America a leader in science and technology. Our thoughts are with his beloved wife Annie, their children John and Carolyn, and the entire Glenn family. The last of America's first astronauts has left us, but propelled by their example we know that our future here on Earth compels us to keep reaching for the heavens. On behalf of a grateful nation, Godspeed, John Glenn.

NOTE: The related proclamation of December 9 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the United States-Brazil Social Security Agreement December 8, 2016

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95-216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith a social security totalization agreement with Brazil,

titled "Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil," and a related agreement titled "Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the

Agreement on Social Security” (collectively the “Agreements”). The Agreements were signed in Washington, D.C., on June 30, 2015.

The Agreements are similar in objective to the social security agreements already in force with most European Union countries, Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation and to help prevent the lost benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries.

The Agreements contain all provisions mandated by section 233 of the Social Security Act and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4) of the Social Security Act.

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act on the estimated number of individuals who will be affected by the Agreements and the Agreements’ estimated cost effect. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Agreements to me.

I commend the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 8, 2016.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Pay Plan for Civilian Federal Employees

December 8, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting a revised alternative plan for locality pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2017. This revised plan supersedes the original plan issued on November 29, 2016. Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of “national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare,” I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees made significant sacrifices as a result of the 3-year pay freeze that ended in January 2014. Since the pay freeze ended, annual adjustments for civilian Federal employees have also been lower than private sector pay increases and statutory for-

mulas for adjustments to the General Schedule for 2014 through 2016. However, keeping our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course requires tough choices.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.49 percent and costing \$26 billion would go into effect in January 2017. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. In my August 31, 2016, submission of an alternative plan for base pay increases, I stated that the alternative plan for locality payments would be limited so that the total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and the varying locality pay increases would be 1.6 percent of basic payroll, consistent with the assumption in my 2017 Budget. However, in light of the decision of Congress to provide a 2.1 percent pay increase for military personnel in 2017 and reconsideration of current and projected economic conditions, I have concluded it would be appropriate to revise my original alternative plan for locality payments so that the