

## Statement on the Observance of Kwanzaa

December 26, 2016

In this holiday season, Michelle and I send our best wishes to those celebrating Kwanzaa. For families across the country, today marks the beginning of a joyous time to reflect on the rich African American culture and to remember the principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—

principles that reflect our most cherished values as Americans.

As we reflect upon this year, we look forward to the blessings and aspirations that await us in the year to come, and we wish those families that will gather together and light the kinara blessings for a happy and healthy new year.

## Remarks With Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii

December 27, 2016

*Prime Minister Abe.* President Obama, Commander Harris, ladies and gentlemen, and all American citizens: I stand here at Pearl Harbor as the Prime Minister of Japan.

If we listen closely, we can make out the sound of restless waves breaking and then retreating again. The calm inlet of brilliant blue is radiant with the gentle sparkle of the warm sun. Behind me, a striking white form atop the azure is the USS Arizona Memorial.

Together with President Obama, I paid a visit to that memorial, the resting place for many souls. It was a place which brought utter silence to me. Inscribed there are the names of the servicemen who lost their lives. Sailors and marines hailing from California and New York, Michigan and Texas, and various other places, serving to uphold their noble duty of protecting the homeland they loved, lost their lives amidst searing flames that day when aerial bombing tore the USS *Arizona* in two.

Even 75 years later, the USS *Arizona*, now at rest atop the seabed, is the final resting place for a tremendous number of sailors and Marines. Listening again, as I focus my senses, alongside the song of the breeze and the rumble of the rolling waves, I can almost discern the voices of those crewmen: voices of lively conversations, upbeat and at ease on that day, on a Sunday morning; voices of young servicemen talking to each other about their futures and dreams; voices calling out the names of

loved ones in their very final moments; voices praying for the happiness of children still unborn. Each and every one of those servicemen had a mother and a father anxious about his safety. Many had wives and girlfriends they loved, and many must have had children they would have loved watch grow up. All of that was brought to an end. When I contemplate that solemn reality, I am rendered entirely speechless.

“Rest in peace, precious souls of the fallen.” With that overwhelming sentiment, I cast flowers, on behalf of Japanese people, upon the waters where those sailors and marines sleep.

President Obama, the people of the United States of America, and the people around the world: As the Prime Minister of Japan, I offer my sincere and everlasting condolences to the souls of those who lost their lives here, as well as to the spirits of all the brave men and women whose lives were taken by a war that commenced in this very place and also to the souls of the countless innocent people who became the victims of the war.

We must never repeat the horrors of war again. This is the solemn vow we, the people of Japan, have taken. And since the war, we have created a free and democratic country that values the rule of law and has resolutely upheld our vow never again to wage war. We, the people of Japan, will continue to uphold this unwavering principle while harboring quiet pride