

working together. Because that's always been our story: the story of ordinary people coming together in the hard, slow, sometimes frustrating, but always vital, work of self-government.

It has been the privilege of my life to serve as your President. And as I prepare to take on the even more important role of citizen, know that I will be there with you every step of the way to ensure that this country forever strives to live up to the incredible promise of our founding: that all of us are created equal and all of us deserve every chance to live out our dreams.

Message on the President's Farewell Address to the Nation *January 2, 2017*

In 1796, as George Washington set the precedent for a peaceful, democratic transfer of power, he also set a precedent by penning a farewell address to the American people. And over the 220 years since, many American presidents have followed his lead.

On Tuesday, January 10, I'll go home to Chicago to say my grateful farewell to you, even if you can't be there in person.

I'm just beginning to write my remarks. But I'm thinking about them as a chance to say thank you for this amazing journey, to celebrate the ways you've changed this country for the better these past eight years, and to offer some thoughts on where we all go from here.

Remarks During a Meeting With Department of Defense Leadership *January 4, 2017*

Well, happy New Year, everybody. Let me begin by thanking Ash Carter, our Secretary of Defense; General Joe Dunford, Vice Chair Paul Selva, and all of our commanders here.

The purpose of this meeting, something I do on a regular basis, is to allow me to hear directly from those who are charged with the most solemn responsibility of maintaining the finest fighting force that the world has ever known and keeping the American people safe. It is in these meetings that we have been able to set broad

From the Obama family to yours, have a happy and blessed 2017.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:30 p.m. on December 16 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on December 31. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 30, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 31. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Since 2009, we've faced our fair share of challenges, and come through them stronger. That's because we have never let go of a belief that has guided us ever since our founding—our conviction that, together, we can change this country for the better.

So I hope you'll join me one last time.

Because, for me, it's always been about you.

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as an e-mail message from the President distributed to the White House e-mail list and posted on the White House blog.

strategy, identify areas where we have to improve, address the health of the force. And I can say to the American people that they are extraordinarily lucky and I am extraordinarily lucky to be served by such extraordinary patriots.

This will be my last meeting with them. And so part of my goal here is just to say thank you to them and let them know how much I appreciate the counsel, the advice, the leadership that they have consistently shown throughout my time in office.