

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action To Prevent Iran From Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon

January 16, 2017

Today marks the 1-year anniversary of the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a deal that has achieved significant, concrete results in making the United States and the world a safer place. This historic understanding reached between the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, the European Union, and Iran has rolled back the Iranian nuclear program and verifiably prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

One year ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verified that Iran had fulfilled key commitments spelled out under the JCPOA. Instead of steadily expanding, Iran's nuclear program faces strict limitations and is subject to the most intrusive inspection and verification program ever negotiated to monitor a nuclear program. Iran reduced its uranium stockpile by 98 percent and removed two-thirds of its centrifuges. Meanwhile, Iran has not enriched any uranium at the Fordow facility nor used advanced centrifuges to enrich. In short, Iran is upholding its commitments, demonstrating the success of diplomacy.

While this deal was intended to address Iran's nuclear program, we have remained steadfast in opposing Iran's threats against Israel and our Gulf partners and its support for violent proxies in places like Syria and Yemen. We continue to be deeply concerned about U.S. citizens unjustly imprisoned in Iran. And our sanctions on Iran for its human rights abuses, its support for terrorist groups, and its ballistic missile program will remain until Iran pursues a new path on those issues. There is no question, however, that the challenges we face with Iran would be much worse if Iran were also on the threshold of building a nuclear weapon.

The United States must remember that this agreement was the result of years of work and represents an agreement between the world's major powers, not simply the United States and Iran. Moreover, the Iran deal must be measured against the alternatives. A diplomatic resolution that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is far preferable to an unconstrained Iranian nuclear program or another war in the Middle East.

Remarks During White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest's Final Briefing and an Exchange With Reporters

January 17, 2017

[*The President joined the briefing in progress.*]

The President. I'm not interrupting because he was saying nice things about you guys—[*laughter*—because I largely concur.

When I first met Josh Earnest, he was in Iowa. I think he was wearing jeans. He looked even younger than he was. And since my entire campaign depended on communications in Iowa, I gave him a pretty good once-over. And there are a couple things I learned about him right away. Number one, he's just got that all-American, matinee, good-looking thing going.

[*Laughter*] That's helpful. Let's face it. Face made for television. [*Laughter*] Then, the guy's name is Josh Earnest—[*laughter*—which, if somebody is speaking on your behalf, is a pretty good name to have. [*Laughter*]

But what struck me most, in addition to his smarts and his maturity and his actual interest in the issues, was his integrity. There are people you meet who you have a pretty good inkling right off the bat are straight shooters and were raised to be fundamentally honest and to treat people with respect. And there are times where that first impression turns out to be

wrong, and you're a little disappointed. And you see behind the curtain that there's spin and some hype and posturing going on. But then, there's others who, the longer you know them, the better you know them, the more time you spend with them, the more you're tested under tough situations, the more that initial impression is confirmed.

And I have now known this guy for 10 years, almost, and I've watched him grow, and I've watched him advance, and I've watched him marry, and I've watched him be a father, and I've watched him manage younger people coming up behind him. And he's never disappointed. He has always been the guy you wanted him to be.

And I think that if you're the President of the United States and you find out that this is the guy who has been voted the most popular Press Secretary ever by the White House Press Corps, that may make you a little nervous—[laughter]—thinking, well, maybe the guy's kind of being too solicitous towards the press. But the fact is, is that he was worthy of that admiration.

He was tough, and he didn't always give you guys everything you wanted. But he was always prepared. He was always courteous. He always tried to make sure that he could share with you as much of our thinking and our policy and our vision as possible and tried to be as responsive as possible. And that's how he trained the rest of his team to be.

So, of the folks that I've had the great joy and pleasure of working with over the last 10 years on this incredible journey, this guy ranks as high as just about anybody I've worked with. He is not only a great Press Secretary, but more importantly, he is a really, really good man. And I'm really, really proud of him.

So, Josh, congratulations.

Press Secretary Earnest. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.

And, Natalie and Walker, thanks for putting up with all of this, because they've made sacrifices too.

Press Secretary Earnest. Thank you, sir.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, before you go—a response to Vladimir Putin?

The President. I'm going to be here tomorrow. [Laughter]

Q. Where are you going on Friday? [Laughter]

[At this point, the President departed, and Press Secretary Earnest continued the briefing.]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:26 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Natalie Wyeth Earnest, wife, and Walker Earnest, son, of Press Secretary Earnest.

Memorandum on Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State Under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017

January 17, 2017

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State Under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby order as follows:

I hereby delegate to the Secretary of State the authority vested in the President by section 1287(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328) (the "Act"), to designate a senior official to develop guidance for the Global Engagement Center relating to relevant privacy and civil liberties laws, and to ensure compliance with such guidance.

Any reference in this memorandum to the Act shall be deemed to be a reference to any