

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2011*

**Remarks in London, England**

*May 24, 2011*

*Tornado Destruction in the Midwest*

Good morning, everybody. Before our day starts here in England, I wanted to say a few words about the devastating storms that we've seen in Missouri, in Minnesota, and across the Midwest.

Like all Americans, we have been monitoring what's been taking place very closely and have been heartbroken by the images that we've seen in Joplin, Missouri, in particular. The devastation is comparable and may end up exceeding some of the devastation that we saw in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, just a few weeks ago.

So far we know that over 100 people lost their lives, others remain missing, and hundreds more are injured. And obviously, our thoughts and prayers are with the families who are suffering at this moment. And all we can do is let them know that all of America cares deeply about them and that we are going to do absolutely everything we can to make sure that they recover.

These storms often strike without warning, as we saw a little further south over the last couple of weeks. And it's going to be important for us to make sure that we are sustaining our efforts at rebuilding after the news cameras leave. We can make sure that the families and communities upended by these storms have everything they need to pull through. And in that regard, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano as well as I have spoken with Missouri Governor Jay Nixon. We've offered him not only our condolences, but we've told him that we will give him every ounce of resources that the Federal Government may have, that we can bring to bear on this situation.

At my direction, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and Deputy Administrator Rich Serino have traveled to Missouri to make sure our Federal Government is working hand in hand with State and local officials to give them the help that they need. And on Sunday, I myself will travel to Missouri to talk with folks who've been affected, to talk to local officials about our response effort, and hopefully, to pray with folks and give them whatever assurance and comfort I can that the entire country is going to be behind them.

Now, these storms that came this weekend obviously compounded what has already been an extraordinary storm season throughout the Midwest and in the South. We understand that there are more storms that are forecast today. So the thing I think I want to emphasize more than anything else: It is critical that Americans in affected areas heed storm warnings and take the lead of your local officials.

I know that a lot of people are wondering how they'll get through the coming days or months or even years. But I want everybody in Joplin, everybody in Missouri, everybody in Minnesota—everybody across the Midwest—to know that we are here for you. The American people are by your side. We're going to stay there until every home is repaired, until every neighborhood is rebuilt, until every business is back on its feet. That's my commitment, and that's the American people's commitment.

Thanks very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. at Winfield House.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : England :: Tornado destruction in U.S. Midwest, remarks from London.

*Locations:* London, England.

*Names:* Fugate, W. Craig; Napolitano, Janet A.; Nixon, Jeremiah W. "Jay"; Serino, Richard A.

*Subjects:* Alabama : Tornadoes, damage and recovery efforts; Disaster assistance : Missouri; Homeland Security, Department of : Emergency Management Agency, Federal; Homeland Security, Department of : Secretary; Minnesota: Tornadoes, damage and recovery efforts; Missouri : Governor; Missouri : Tornadoes, damage and recovery efforts; Natural disasters : Midwest region, tornadoes; Natural disasters : Southeast region, tornadoes; United Kingdom : President Obama's visit.

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