

Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

Statement on the Observance of Ramadan

July 8, 2013

With the start of the sacred month of Ramadan, Michelle and I extend our best wishes to Muslim communities here in the United States and around the world.

For the world's 1.5 billion Muslims, Ramadan is a time for thoughtful reflection, fasting, and devotion. It is also an opportunity for family and friends to come together and celebrate the principles that bind people of different faiths: a commitment to peace, justice, equality, and compassion towards our fellow human beings. These bonds are far stronger than the differences that too often drive us apart.

This month also reminds us that freedom, dignity, and opportunity are the undeniable rights of all mankind. We reflect on these universal values at a time when many citizens across the Middle East and North Africa continue to strive for these basic rights and as millions of refugees mark Ramadan far from their homes. The United States stands with those who are working to build a world where all people can write their own future and practice their faith freely, without fear of violence.

In the United States, Ramadan is a reminder that millions of Muslim Americans enrich our Nation each day: serving in our Government, leading scientific breakthroughs, generating jobs, and caring for our neighbors in need. I have been honored to host an iftar dinner at the White House each of the past 4 years, and this year, I look forward to welcoming Muslim Americans who are contributing to our country as entrepreneurs, activists, and artists.

I wish Muslims across America and around the world a month blessed with the joys of family, peace, and understanding. *Ramadan kareem.*

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