

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2015*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
Leaders in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

*November 21, 2015*

Thank you very much, Prime Minister Najib, and thank you to my fellow leaders for being here today. I am very proud that this is my sixth meeting with ASEAN. As President, I've deepened America's cooperation with ASEAN because a united, integrated, and effective ASEAN in the center of Asia is a force of stability, prosperity, and peace.

As the Prime Minister mentioned, I'm pleased today that we're elevating our relationship to a new level: a strategic partnership to guide and strengthen our ties for decades to come, including in maritime cooperation. The United States and ASEAN will be closer than ever.

ASEAN plays a vital role in advancing a rules-based order for the Asia-Pacific. I commend ASEAN for working to ensure that all nations uphold international law and norms, including the peaceful resolution of disputes, freedom of navigation, and freedom of overflight. And I applaud ASEAN for working to create a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. For the sake of regional stability, claimants should halt reclamation, new construction, and militarization of disputed areas.

I also congratulate my fellow leaders on the formation of the ASEAN Community, which is another major step toward integrating economies and greater regional stability. And as the Prime Minister noted, we are already a major investor in ASEAN. We do an enormous amount of trade. You will continue to have the support and partnership of the United States.

And I expect that we'll also have an opportunity to discuss the urgency of confronting climate change. ASEAN, like the rest of the Asia-Pacific, is increasingly feeling the effects of warmer temperatures. Almost all the countries here today have submitted their post-2020 climate targets. So working together, I believe we can achieve an ambitious and durable climate agreement in Paris.

We'll have time to discuss, hopefully, some other issues: educational and scientific exchanges, the work that we are doing to counter violent extremism and terrorists. But our partnership I think has grown stronger throughout these meetings, and I'm looking forward to a very productive session again here in Kuala Lumpur.

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:10 p.m. at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

*Categories:* Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Association of Southeast Asian Nations leaders.

*Locations:* Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

*Names:* Najib Razak.

*Subjects:* Asia : Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); Asia : South China Sea, maritime territorial disputes; Environment : Climate change; Malaysia : President Obama's visit; Malaysia : Prime Minister.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201500834.