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Janet A. Napolitano. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. Chancellor Merkel and some reporters spoke in German, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims

June 26, 2009

Twenty-five years ago, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention Against Torture, and 22 years ago this very day, the convention entered into force. The United States leading role in the negotiation of the convention and its subsequent ratification and implementation enjoyed strong bipartisan support. Today we join the international community in reaffirming unequivocally the principles behind that convention, including the core principle that torture is never justified.

Torture violates United States and international law as well as human dignity. Torture is contrary to the founding documents of our country and the fundamental values of our people. It diminishes the security of those who carry it out and surrenders the moral authority that must form the basis for just leadership. That is why the United States must never engage in torture and must stand against torture wherever it takes place.

My administration is committed to taking concrete actions against torture and to address the needs of its victims. On my third day in office, I issued an Executive order that prohibits torture by the United States. My budget request for fiscal year 2010 includes continued support for international and domestic groups working to rehabilitate torture victims.

The United States will continue to cooperate with governments and civil society organizations throughout the international community in the fight to end torture. To this end, I have requested today that the Department of State solicit information from all of our diplomatic missions around the world about effective policies and programs for stopping torture and assisting its victims, so that we and our civil society partners can learn from what others have done. I applaud the courage, compassion, and commitment of the many people and organizations doing this vitally important work.

Remarks on Energy Legislation

June 26, 2009

Today the House of Representatives took historic action with the passage of the American Clean Energy and Security Act. It's a bold and necessary step that holds the promise of creating new industries and millions of new jobs, decreasing our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, and strictly limiting the release of pollutants that threaten the health of families and communities and the planet itself. Now it's up to the Senate to take the next step. And I'm confident that in the coming weeks and months the Senate will demonstrate the same commitment to addressing what is a tremendous challenge and an extraordinary opportunity.

As always happens when we debate issues of this magnitude, we see lines of demarcation. There are those who argue that the status quo is acceptable, those who would have us continue our dependence on foreign oil and our reliance on fossil fuels despite the risks to our security, our economy, and the planet. But the American people know that the nation that leads in building a 21st century clean energy economy is the nation that will lead in creating a 21st century global economy. I want America to be that nation. And with this vote, the House has put America on the path to being that nation.

The fact is, just weeks ago, few in Washington believed that this day would come to pass.