

*Oct. 1 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2009*

made it clear that we will do our part to engage the Iranian Government on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect, but our patience is not unlimited.

This is not about singling out Iran. This is not about creating double standards. This is about the global nonproliferation regime and Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy, just as all nations have it, but with that right comes responsibilities. The burden of meeting these

responsibilities lies with the Iranian Government, and they are now the ones that need to make that choice.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:22 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Toigiola T.A. Tulafono and Delegate Eni F.H. Faleomavaega of American Samoa.

## Statement on the Anniversary of the Birth of Mahatma Gandhi *October 1, 2009*

On behalf of the American people, I want to express appreciation for the life and lessons of Mahatma Gandhi on the anniversary of his birth. This is an important moment to reflect on his message of nonviolence, which continues to inspire people and political movements across the globe.

We join the people of India in celebrating this great soul who lived a life dedicated to the cause of advancing justice, showing tolerance to all, and creating change through nonviolent resistance.

Americans owe an enormous measure of gratitude to the Mahatma. His teachings and ideals, shared with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on his 1959 pilgrimage to India, transformed American society through our civil rights movement. The America of today has its roots in the India of Mahatma Gandhi and the non-violent social action movement for Indian independence which he led.

Tomorrow, as we remember the Mahatma on his birthday, we must renew our commitment to live his ideals and to celebrate the dignity of all human beings.

## Remarks to the International Olympic Committee in Copenhagen, Denmark *October 2, 2009*

President Rogge, ladies and gentlemen of the International Olympic Committee: I come here today as a passionate supporter of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as a strong believer in the movement they represent, and as a proud Chicagoan. But above all, I come as a faithful representative of the American people, and we look forward to welcoming the world to the shores of Lake Michigan and the heartland of our Nation in 2016.

To host athletes and visitors from every corner of the globe is a high honor and a great responsibility. And America is ready and eager to assume that sacred trust. We're a nation that has always opened its arms to the citizens of the world—including my own father from the African Continent—people who have sought

something better, who have dreamed of something bigger.

I know you face a difficult choice among several great cities and nations with impressive bids of their own. So I've come here today to urge you to choose Chicago for the same reason I chose Chicago nearly 25 years ago, the reason I fell in love with the city I still call home. And it's not just because it's where I met the woman you just heard from, although after getting to know her this week, I know you'll all agree that she's a pretty big selling point for the city.

You see, growing up, my family moved around a lot. I was born in Hawaii. I lived in Indonesia for a time. I never really had roots in any one place or culture or ethnic group. And then I came to Chicago. And on those

Chicago streets, I worked alongside men and women who were Black and White, Latino and Asian, people of every class and nationality and religion. I came to discover that Chicago is that most American of American cities, but one where citizens from more than 130 nations inhabit a rich tapestry of distinctive neighborhoods.

Each one of those neighborhoods—from Greektown to the Ukrainian Village, from Devon to Pilsen to Washington Park—has its own unique character, its own unique history, its songs, its language. But each is also part of our city—one city—a city where I finally found a home.

Chicago is a place where we strive to celebrate what makes us different, just as we celebrate what we have in common. It's a place where our unity is on colorful display at so many festivals and parades, and especially sporting events, where perfect strangers become fast friends just because they're wearing the same jersey. It's a city that works, from its first World's Fair more than a century ago to the World Cup we hosted in the nineties, we know how to put on big events. And scores of visitors and spectators will tell you that we do it well.

Chicago is a city where the practical and the inspirational exist in harmony, where visionaries who made no small plans rebuilt after a great fire and taught the world to reach new heights. It's a bustling metropolis with the warmth of a small town, where the world already comes together every day to live and work and reach for a dream, a dream that no matter who we are, where we come from, no matter what we look like or what hand life has dealt us, with hard work and discipline and dedication, we can make it if we try.

That's not just the American Dream; that is the Olympic spirit. It's the essence of the Olympic spirit. And that's why we see so much of ourselves in these games. That's why we want them in Chicago. That's why we want them in America.

Now, we stand at a moment in history when the fate of each nation is inextricably linked to the fate of all nations, a time of common challenges that require common effort. And I ran for President because I believed deeply that at

this defining moment, the United States of America has a responsibility to help in that effort, to forge new partnerships with the nations and the peoples of the world.

And no one expects the games to solve all our collective challenges. But what we do believe, what each and every one of you believe and what all of the Chicago delegation believes, is that in a world where we've all too often witnessed the darker aspects of our humanity, peaceful competition between nations represents what's best about our humanity. It brings us together, if only for a few weeks, face to face. It helps us understand one another just a little bit better. It reminds us that no matter how or where we differ, we all seek our own measure of happiness and fulfillment and pride in what we do. That's a very powerful starting point for progress.

Nearly 1 year ago, on a clear November night, people from every corner of the world gathered in the city of Chicago or in front of their televisions to watch the results of the U.S. Presidential election. Their interest wasn't about me as an individual, rather, it was rooted in the belief that America's experiment in democracy still speaks to a set of universal aspirations and ideals. Their interest sprung from the hope that in this ever-shrinking world, our diversity could be a source of strength, a cause for celebration; and that with sustained work and determination, we could learn to live and prosper together during the fleeting moment we share on this Earth.

Now, that work is far from over, but it has begun in earnest. And while we do not know what the next few years will bring, there is nothing I would like more than to step just a few blocks from my family's home, with Michelle and our two girls, and welcome the world back into our neighborhood.

At the beginning of this new century, the Nation that has been shaped by people from around the world wants a chance to inspire it once more: to ignite the spirit of possibility at the heart of the Olympic and Paralympic movement in a new generation; to offer a stage worthy of the extraordinary talent and dynamism offered by nations joined together; to host games that unite us in noble competition and

shared celebration of our limitless potential as a people.

And so I urge you to choose Chicago; I urge you to choose America. And if you do, if we walk this path together, then I promise you this: The city of Chicago and the United States of America will make the world proud. Thank you so much.

## Remarks at a Question-and-Answer Session With Members of the International Olympic Committee in Copenhagen October 2, 2009

[*The question-and-answer session was joined in progress.*]

*Patrick G. Ryan.* The next question relates to—comes from Mr. Ali, and thank you for the question. How do we intend to deal with all of the millions of people who will enter? And I'd like Lori Healey to answer that question, please.

*Lori T. Healey.* Thank you, and thank you for the question. We are very fortunate, as evidenced by the presence of the President and the First Lady here today, to have a terrifically strong partnership with the Federal Government in Washington. We've worked very closely with the U.S. State Department. Secretary Clinton has also been a very good partner and has worked to assure everyone the full cooperation of the Federal Government. Additionally, in June, the White House announced the formation of the Office of Olympic, Paralympic, and Youth Sport that will act as the coordinating agency if we are so privileged to be selected for the right to host the games, to put all the forces of the Federal Government behind that.

*Mr. Ryan.* If President Obama would like to add to that, please.

*The President.* First, emphasize what Lori said in response to Mr. Ali's question. One of the legacies I want to see coming out of the Chicago 2016 hosting of the games is a re-

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:27 a.m. in the Bella Center. In his remarks, he referred to Jacques Rogge, president, International Olympic Committee. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

minder that America at its best is open to the world. And as has already been indicated, we are putting the full force of the White House and the State Department to make sure that not only is this a successful games, but that visitors from all around the world feel welcome and will come away with a sense of the incredible diversity of the American people.

And I'm very impressed with part of the presentation that we made matching up host families for the athletes who are going to be there, because, as I said, Chicago, we've got everybody. This could be a meeting in Chicago, because we look like the world. And I think that over the last several years, sometimes that fundamental truth about the United States has been lost. And one of the legacies, I think, of this Olympics Games in Chicago would be a restoration of that understanding of what the United States is all about, and the United States recognition of how we are linked to the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:51 a.m. in the Bella Center. In his remarks, he referred to Syed Shahid Ali, member, International Olympic Committee. Participating in the question-and-answer session were Patrick G. Ryan, chairman and chief executive officer, and Lori T. Healey, president, Chicago 2016. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.