

facilitates cooperation in areas as diverse as defense and security, education, science and technology exchanges, economic revitalization, law enforcement, and development in the Azores. We also noted that in recent years, partnerships between Portuguese and American universities are developing state of the art research in areas such as engineering, information technology, and medicine, and we committed to fostering these relationships in the future.

This meeting was an opportunity for exchanging views on the present world economic and financial situation. The United States underscored its full support for Portugal's implementation of its reform program backed by the IMF and the EU.

We also agreed to continue our close cooperation within the U.N. Security Council, where Portugal currently serves as Council President, on issues of mutual concern, such as Syria, Libya, Middle East peace, and Iran. We

emphasized the importance that both our countries attach to the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace, democracy, good governance and human rights.

As two of the original founding members of NATO, we reaffirmed our commitment to the Atlantic Alliance. We discussed ongoing NATO operations, in particular in Afghanistan, where Portugal intends to maintain its contribution. Recalling the success of the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, we reviewed plans for the May 2012 NATO Summit that President Obama will host in Chicago. We agreed that we would work together in the coming months to ensure that the Summit advances our joint goal of ensuring that the Alliance is fully prepared to meet the security challenges of the 21st century.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Weapons of Mass Destruction November 9, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency

with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938, as amended, is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond November 14, 2011.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
November 9, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the National Women's Law Center Awards Dinner November 9, 2011

The President. Well, good evening, everybody.
Audience members. Good evening.

The President. It is great to be back at the National Women's Law Center, surrounded by so many powerful and accomplished women. This is not a new experience for me.

[*Laughter*] Some of you know my household is filled with powerful, accomplished women.

I want to thank Marcia and Duffy for that wonderful, heartfelt introduction and for their extraordinary leadership. Most of all, I want to

recognize tonight's honorees, the women and men—there's some men in the group—[*laughter*]*—*who endured insults and beatings and risked their lives 50 years ago because they believed in a different future for their daughters and for their sons. The Freedom Riders had faith that America could still be perfected. And as has been noted, it is only because they did that I am able to stand here as President of the United States of America. Which is why, when I had a chance to see them backstage, I gave them all a kiss and a hug. [*Laughter*] And I told them that even though I was in diapers at the time, I knew something important was going on. [*Laughter*]

What a remarkable group of people, and how blessed we are to have them here, sharing their stories and continuing to inspire us in so many ways. We are truly grateful to you.

Being here tonight reminds us that history is not always made—in fact, often is not made—by generals or presidents or politicians. Change doesn't always happen quickly or easily. Change happens when a group of students and activists decide to ride a bus down South, knowing full well the dangers that lie ahead. Change happens when a group of legal secretaries decides that the world needs more women attorneys, and they start an organization to fight for people like them. Change happens when one woman decides: "I don't want to be paid less than that man who's doing the exact same job over there. I want to be paid the same." Change depends on persistence, and change depends on determination. That's how change happens.

That's how change happened on August 4, 1961. That's how change will happen today, especially when it comes to securing equal rights and equal opportunities for women.

Now, the last time I spoke here was in 2005. I was brand new to Washington. Some of you still could not pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] And when I was thinking about what to say to this group, I wasn't just thinking about the legal cases you've helped to win or the milestones that you've helped to reach. I was thinking about my daughters and the world I want them to grow up in.

And I think it's fair to say that a few things have changed since then. Michelle helpfully reminds me that I have more gray hair now. [*Laughter*] More people know my name, which I've come to realize is a mixed blessing. [*Laughter*] Malia and Sasha have grown into these strong, smart, remarkable young women. They are growing too fast. Malia has a cell phone now, certainly a mixed blessing. [*Laughter*]

But even after all this time, my wish for my daughters and for yours remains the same. I want them to go out into a world where there is no limit to how big they can dream, how high they can reach. And being here with all of you gives me hope and makes me determined, because although this journey is far from over, today our daughters live in a world that is fairer and more equal than it was 6 years ago, a world where more doors are open to them than ever before.

Today, for the first time in history, our daughters can see not one, not two, but three women sitting on the bench of the highest court in the land. They can come to the White House and see that the top four lawyers on my staff—some of the sharpest legal minds I've ever come across—are women. They can read about the extraordinary leadership of a woman in the House of Representatives who went by the title "Madam Speaker." They can turn on the news and see that one of the most formidable Presidential candidates we've ever seen has become one of the best Secretaries of State that this country has ever known.

Today, women make up almost half of our workforce, the majority of students in our colleges and our graduate schools. Women are breaking barriers in every field, from science to business to sports to the Armed Forces.

And today, thanks to health care reform that many of you helped pass, insurance companies can no longer deny coverage based on preexisting conditions like breast cancer or charge women more because they're more likely to incur costs for things like birth—childbirth. Those same companies must cover the cost of preventive services like mammograms, domestic violence counseling, contraception. We're

making sure that women in the military and our veterans get the care that they need.

Today, thanks to the tireless efforts of people like Lilly Ledbetter—one of my favorite people, love that woman—[laughter]—we were backstage talking, and she was just saying how grateful she was, how much of a responsibility she now felt with this bill having been passed that was named after her. I said: “Lilly, all that did was just—that was just icing on the cake. It was your work, your courage, your determination that changed things. All we did was ratify what you had already done.” And because of her and other courageous women and some of the women in this room tonight, it is easier for women to demand equal pay for equal work.

We passed tax credits that are keeping more women out of poverty and helping them reach the middle class. Companies are being encouraged to make workplaces more flexible so women don't have to choose between being a good employee and a good parent. One of the first things I did after taking office was to create a White House Council on Women and Girls to make sure that every agency in the Federal Government considers the needs of women and girls in every decision they make, not as a sideshow, not as a box to check, but something that is sustained each and every day.

So this is progress. This is progress. This is change. It's laborious. Sometimes it's frustrating. But it's real. And of course, one thing we've learned from the women's movement, from the civil rights movement, from the workers' movement, from every step that we've made to make this country more equal and more just, is that there is always more work to do. There are always more challenges to meet. And that's especially true today, with so many Americans struggling to recover from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

In the early days of this crisis, women weren't hit quite as hard as men. Many of the jobs that we've lost over the last decade have been in construction and manufacturing, industries that traditionally had been dominated by men. And of the 15 job categories projected to grow the most in this country over the next

decade, all but 2 are occupied primarily by women.

But over the last couple of years, women have continued to lose jobs, especially in the public sector. It doesn't help that mothers are the primary or cobreadwinners in 63 percent of households, even as women still earn just 77 cents for every dollar a man does. Some of these women are single moms like my mother was, struggling just to keep up with the bills or pay a mortgage they can't afford. I still remember my mother waking me up—she worked, was going to school, and still took the time to wake me up before she went to work to go over my lessons before she left. And I would complain and grumble, and she would say, “Well, this is no picnic for me either, buster.” [Laughter]

These are the quiet heroes. Their names don't make the history books. They're never complaining—well, I won't say they're never complaining—[laughter]—I was thinking about that for a second—never hesitating to work that extra shift or that extra job if that's what it takes to give their children a better life. And in many ways, that's why we're all here tonight, because we know that it's up to us to keep fighting for them—all those women out there—making sure that they are treated fairly and equally. As hard as they're working, as much as they're sacrificing, as many responsibilities that they shoulder each and every day, we've got to make sure that they are getting the opportunities that they deserve, that somebody is standing up for them. Somebody is fighting for them. Somebody is looking out for them. Somebody is rooting for them.

Of course, let's be clear about one thing: When we talk about these issues that primarily affect women, these are not just women's issues. When women make less than men for the same work, that hurts the entire family who has to get by with less. It hurts businesses who have fewer customers with money to spend. When a health care plan denies women coverage because of a preexisting condition, that puts a strain on emergency rooms, drives up health care costs for everybody. When any of our citizens can't fulfill their potential because of factors that have nothing to do with their tal-

ent or their character or their work ethic, that diminishes us. It says something about who we are.

Here's a fact: If you want to look around the world, those countries that are developing fastest, that are doing the best, where their children are succeeding in school, those are societies that respect the rights of women, that are investing in our women.

Lifting women up lifts up our economy and lifts up our country. Now unfortunately, not everybody in Washington seems to feel the same way. In recent weeks, Republicans in the Senate have come together three times to block jobs bills that independent economists say would boost our economy and put millions back to work, including women. Each of these bills was made up of the same kinds of proposals that Democrats and Republicans have historically supported in the past, and they were fully paid for. And even though they were supported by a clear majority of the American people—Republicans, Democrats, Independents—every single Senate Republican said no.

Said no to putting hundreds of thousands of teachers, three-quarters of them women, back in front of the classroom where they belong. No to putting construction workers back on the job and funding a special program that gets more women involved in the construction industry.

Well, I've got news for Congress: We are not done yet. In the weeks ahead, they're going to get a chance to vote on whether we give a tax cut to virtually every small-business owner in America, including 900,000 women. These are folks who run the restaurants and stores and beauty shops and other small businesses that create two-thirds of all new jobs. There's no reason they shouldn't get a break.

The American people are with me with—on this, and Republicans in Congress should be with me too, because it's right for the country. Instead, they're spending time focusing on how to turn back the clock. Instead of figuring out how to put more Americans back to work, they've been trying to figure out how to take away preventive care that is covered under the

Affordable Care Act. Instead of making life easier for women in this country, they want to let insurance companies go back to charging higher prices just because you're a woman. Instead of working to boost our economy, they're out there spending time trying to defund Planned Parenthood and prevent millions of women from getting basic health care that they desperately need: Pap smears and breast exams.

That is not the right direction for this country. These folks know they can't win on the big issues, so they're trying to make the fight about social issues that stir up their base. They're spending their time trying to divide this country against itself rather than coming together to lift up our country.

And we don't have to settle for that. The American people shouldn't have to settle for that. And that's why I need your help. As leaders in your communities, I need you to tell Congress to do their jobs by worrying about the jobs of the millions of Americans they were elected to serve. I need you to make your voices heard. And for my part, I promise to keep doing everything I can to help every single American achieve their own piece of the American Dream.

That's not just a promise I'm making as a President. That's a promise I'm making as a grandson who saw my grandmother hit the glass ceiling at the bank where she worked, passed over for promotions in favor of men that she trained.

It's a promise I'm making as a husband who watched Michelle balance work and family with grace and poise, even when it hasn't been easy.

It's a promise I'm making as a father who wants my daughters to grow up in a world where every door is open to them, where there are no limits on what they can achieve.

It's a promise I'm making as the inheritor of the extraordinary sacrifices that were made by these Freedom Riders, as a friend of people like Lilly Ledbetter, who embody all that's good and decent in this country.

It's a promise I'm making as an American who believes that the future of our country

depends on expanding the circle of opportunity for everybody, because that next generation of smart, powerful women, they're already knocking on the door. They're coming, and we need to get ready. [Laughter]

Last month, I got a chance to meet the winners of the Google Science Fair. This is an international competition of high school students, the cutting edge of technology and science. All three of the winners turned out to be Americans. All three were girls. They had beat out 10,000 other applicants from more than 90 countries. So I had them in the Oval Office, and they explained their projects to me—[laughter]—and I pretended that I understood what they were talking about. [Laughter] There's a picture of this conversation hanging up in the West Wing right now, and they're—I've got a puzzled look on my face—[laughter]—and they're being very patient.

So one of the winners, Shree Bose, discovered a promising new way to improve treatment for ovarian cancer at the age of 17. Then I asked another winner, Lauren Hodge, if she had skipped a grade in school; she was quite petite. [Laughter] And she informed me very politely that she had actually skipped two. [Laughter] Okay. [Laughter]

It's people like Shree and Lauren, all of you who are here tonight, who make me hopeful about the future. There's a direct line between

those women who sat in those jail cells and those young girls explaining their science project in the Oval Office. There's a direct connection. Because that's what America is about, a place where ideas are born and dreams can grow and where a student in a classroom or a passenger on a bus or a legal secretary in an office can stand up and say, "I am going to change the world." We have always been a nation where anything is possible.

That's the kind of nation that we are. That's the kind of opportunity that must exist here in America. That's the kind of opportunity that must exist for every American, no matter what they look like or where they come from. We've come a long way towards making this country more open and more free for our daughters and theirs. We've got a lot more work to do. With the National Women's Law Center, I am confident that the next time I visit, we'll be even closer to guaranteeing every one of our children get the future they deserve.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:36 p.m. at the Washington Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Marcia D. Greenberger and Nancy Duff Cambell, copresidents, National Women's Law Center; and Naomi Shah, winner of the 2011 Google Science Fair.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Birth of the Founder of Sikhism *November 10, 2011*

I send my best wishes to all those observing the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the first Sikh guru. On this occasion, we are reminded of the fundamental principles of Sikhism, including the equality of all people, the sanctity of living an honest life, and the importance of service to our neighbors. I'm proud that during my Presidency the White

House hosted the first celebration of the birth of Guru Nanak, and our country is grateful for the extraordinary contributions that Sikh Americans have made to our Nation. As Sikhs across America and around the world celebrate the life of Guru Nanak, all of us can draw inspiration from his message of equality, honesty, and helping those who are in need.