

tremendous sacrifices made and the hardships endured by those who fight for our freedom.

American prisoners of war have experienced extreme conditions across the world and many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Sixty-seven years ago, in the midst of World War II, nearly 12,000 Americans and 76,000 Filipinos were captured while defending positions on the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines. As prisoners of war, they endured the Bataan Death March, suffering starvation, torture, and unspeakable conditions. Thousands were randomly executed and many perished on this journey. During the Korean War, more than 1,600 Americans died under grave conditions at the Pyok Tong camp. In Vietnam's Hoa Lo Prison—the infamous Hanoi Hilton—Americans endured torture and other forms of inhumane treatment.

There are countless tales of the bravery of American prisoners of war—of the burdens borne, of the acts of heroism. These individuals have made great sacrifices and have demonstrated an enduring faith in themselves and in the United States. Their commitment calls out to all Americans to live up to our Nation's highest ideals and to serve our fellow citizens with equal selflessness and honor. We will never forget their sacrifices. Their spirit of service will inspire the American people for generations to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2009, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, and I urge all Americans to observe this day of remembrance with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8361 of April 9, 2009

Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

A common heritage, an interconnected world, and shared goals and values unite the Pan American community. As a proud member of this group of countries, the United States celebrates Pan American Day and Pan American Week and commits to working with our partners in the Organization of American States to advance a common future.

The Pan American community is highly interwoven, and the peoples of the Americas must work together to build the future we seek. When one country faces economic, security, or health challenges, its neighbors share in this hardship. Together, the Pan American community can build strong partnerships to surmount common concerns and further mutual success.

The broad scope of shared goals includes economic growth and equality, increased security, strong democratic governance, and clean energy. Robust, bottom-up economic growth benefits all citizens and all nations, and remains a central goal of the Pan American community. Together, the countries of the Americas can prioritize and enact policies that ensure a shared and equitable economic prosperity. This economic future is possible only if we protect the safety of citizens and the security of our countries. Whether reducing street crime and gang violence, decreasing the narcotics trade, or preventing acts of terrorism, every country has a stake in regional security.

The Pan American community also supports strong democracies and the development of alternative energy sources. The promotion of transparent and enduring democratic governance strengthens and defines relations in the region and should emphasize the rule of law, a robust civil society, respect for human rights, social equality, and effective delivery of public services. Finally, every country benefits from a solution to our shared energy and climate challenges. The region has already witnessed great leadership in the development and deployment of alternative energy sources, and the Pan American community must build upon these promising efforts.

As we celebrate Pan American Day and Pan American Week, and participate in the Summit of the Americas, the United States recognizes the common challenges and aspirations that unite the region and the boundless promise of our continuing partnership.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 2009, as Pan American Day and April 12 through 18 as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8362 of April 17, 2009

National Park Week, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

America's National Parks are among our Nation's most precious treasures. During National Park Week, we celebrate these spaces and commit to protecting them for future generations of Americans.

National Parks bring together Americans of all backgrounds and help us understand the story of America. From the Lincoln Memorial and Ellis Island to the Great Smoky Mountains and Yellowstone, National