

The Cold War is over, but its history holds lessons for us today. In the face of cynicism and stifled opportunity, the world saw daring individuals who held fast to the idea that the world can change and walls could come down. Their courageous struggles and ultimate success—and the enduring conviction of all who keep the light of freedom alive—remind us that human destiny will be what we make of it.

The journey towards worldwide freedom and democracy sought in 1959 remains unfinished. Today, we still observe the profound differences between governments that reflect the will of their people, and those that sustain power by force; between nations striving for equal justice and rule of law, and those that deny their citizens freedom of religion, expression, and peaceful assembly; and between states that are open and accountable, and those that restrict the flow of ideas and information. The United States has a special responsibility to bear witness to those whose voices are silenced, and to stand alongside those who yearn to exercise their universal human rights.

In partnership with like-minded governments, we must reinforce multilateral institutions and international partnerships that safeguard human rights and democratic values. We must empower embattled civil societies and help their people connect with one another and the global community through new technologies. And, with faith in the future, we must always stand with the courageous advocates, organizations, and ordinary citizens around the world who fearlessly fight for limitless opportunity and unfettered freedom.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution, approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of July of each year as “Captive Nations Week.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 18 through July 24, 2010, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to reaffirm our deep commitment to all those working for human rights and dignity around the globe.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8542 of July 26, 2010

Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, 2010

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

When the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990, a founding truth of our Nation was realized for persons living with disabilities—that all our citizens are entitled to the same privileges, pursuits, and civil rights. As we mark the 20th anniversary of this historic legislation, we renew our commitment to ensuring that ev-

everyone with disabilities can live free from the weight of discrimination and pursue the American dream.

Across our country, Americans with disabilities have enriched and strengthened our Nation. Each day, individuals living with disabilities contribute immeasurably to every aspect of our country's national life and economy, from art to law, science to business, education to technology. Through steadfast determination, they have worked to make our communities more accessible, while empowering others to exercise independence and self-determination in all aspects of their lives. They have also brightened futures for countless young people. Today, children and youth with disabilities have a place in our classrooms alongside their peers, and are graduating with the knowledge and skills needed for postsecondary education and beyond.

Yet, despite the progress made in removing barriers and eliminating discrimination based on disability, on this 20th anniversary of the ADA, we must renew our commitment to achieving equal opportunity for, and the full inclusion of, all people with disabilities. My Administration has taken important steps towards achieving this goal. We have expanded funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act so that all of America's children have access to the tools to succeed. Under the health care reforms enacted in the Affordable Care Act, unfair practices like discrimination based on health status or pre-existing conditions will be eliminated. This landmark legislation also creates the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Program to assist Americans with disabilities to live independently. Additionally, the Affordable Care Act provides States with more tools and financial incentives, such as the Community First Choice Option, which will support individuals with disabilities living in the communities of their choosing. These and other initiatives build on the "Year of Community Living," which I launched in 2009 to support independent living.

The Federal Government is committed to leading by example in hiring people with disabilities, with focused efforts to recruit, retain, and support these public servants. In partnership with the many Federal agencies and departments with ADA responsibilities, my Administration will uphold strong and meaningful enforcement of the ADA to eliminate discrimination in employment, housing, public services, and community accommodations. I urge all Americans to visit Disability.gov for comprehensive disability-related information and resources.

I am also proud that the United States has in the past year joined the international community in signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In so doing, we affirm that these rights are not simply principles to safeguard at home, but also universal rights to be respected and advanced around the world.

In honor of and in solidarity with all Americans with disabilities and their loved ones, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the ADA, and recommit to build a more just world, free of unnecessary barriers and full of deeper understanding.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States do hereby proclaim Monday, July 26, 2010, the Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I encourage Americans across our Nation to celebrate the 20th an-

niversary of this civil rights law and the many contributions of individuals with disabilities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8543 of July 26, 2010

National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 2010

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

Today we celebrate the signing of the Military Armistice Agreement at Panmunjom and we honor our servicemembers who fought and died for freedom and democracy in the Korean War. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean War and the birth of an enduring friendship between the United States and the Republic of Korea that is stronger today than ever before. Our alliance is rooted in shared sacrifice, common values, mutual interest, and respect, and this partnership is vital to peace and stability in Asia and the world.

Since our Nation's founding, the United States has relied on our Armed Forces to ensure our safety and security at home, and to protect lives and liberties around the globe. When Communist armies poured across the 38th parallel, threatening the very survival of South Korea, American troops braved unforgiving conditions and rallied to the young republic's defense. Tens of thousands of our Nation's servicemembers lost their lives, and many more were wounded, declared missing in action, or taken as prisoners of war. The courageous service and ultimate sacrifices of these patriots and our allied combatants safeguarded a free government and vibrant economy in South Korea, forging a bond between our people that stands strong today.

As we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War and the eventual conclusion of hostilities at Panmunjom, let us raise our flags high to honor the service and valor of our veterans, to reflect on the principles for which they fought, and to reaffirm the unshakeable bond between South Korea and our Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim July 27, 2010, as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor our distinguished Korean War veterans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA