

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2015*

**The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan**  
*April 28, 2015*

*President Obama.* Good morning, everybody. Please have a seat. Good afternoon.  
*Konnichiwa.* Once again, it is an honor to welcome my partner and friend, Prime Minister Abe, back to the White House. I'm told there's a phrase in Japanese culture that speaks to the spirit that brings us together today. It's an idea rooted in loyalty. It's an expression of mutuality, respect, and shared obligation. It transcends any specific moment or challenge. It's the foundation of a relationship that endures. It's what allows us to say that the United States and Japan stand together. *Otagai no tame ni*—"with and for each other."

This is the essence of the alliance between the United States and Japan, an alliance that holds lessons for the world. Prime Minister Abe and I had the opportunity yesterday to visit our memorial to President Lincoln, who believed that a great conflict had to be followed with reconciliation. Shinzo, on behalf of the American people, I want to thank you for your visit to Arlington National Cemetery. Your gesture is a powerful reminder that the past can be overcome, former adversaries can become the closest of allies, and that nations can build a future together.

Across seven decades, our nations have become not just allies, but true partners and friends. And that mutual affection will be on display tomorrow when Shinzo becomes the first Japanese Prime Minister to address a joint meeting of Congress. And we are two global partners that stand together for security and human dignity around the world: opposing Russia's aggression against Ukraine, providing relief to innocent civilians threatened by ISIL, combating Ebola and promoting global health and now offering help to the people of Nepal, who are in our prayers today.

This friendship includes my partnership with Prime Minister Abe. Since taking office, I've worked to rebalance American foreign policy to ensure that we're playing a larger and lasting role in the Asia-Pacific, a policy grounded in our treaty alliances, including our treaty with Japan. And I'm grateful to Shinzo for his deep commitment to that alliance. He is pursuing a vision of Japan where the Japanese economy is reinvigorated and where Japan makes greater contributions to security and peace in the region and around the world. So, Shinzo, thank you. I believe the progress we've made today will help to guide the U.S.-Japanese partnership for decades to come.

Specifically, we first talked about transforming our security alliance. For the first time in nearly two decades, we've updated the guidelines for our defense cooperation. Together, our forces will be more flexible and better prepared to cooperate on a range of challenges, from maritime security to disaster response. Our forces will plan, train, and operate even more closely. We'll expand our cooperation, including on cyber threats and in space. And Japan will take on greater roles and responsibilities in the Asia-Pacific and around the world.

Our new guidelines complement our effort to realign U.S. Forces across the region, including on Okinawa, in order to lessen the impact of our bases on local communities. And I reaffirmed our commitment to move forward with the relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam.

I want to reiterate that our treaty commitment to Japan's security is absolute, and that article 5 covers all territories under Japan's administration, including Senkaku Islands. We share a concern about China's land reclamation and construction activities in the South China Sea, and the United States and Japan are united in our commitment to freedom of navigation, respect for international law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes without coercion.

We also remain united in pursuit of peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and addressing North Korean provocations. We fully support Japan's efforts to resolve the tragedy of North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens. During my last visit to Japan, I met with the mother of one of those abductees, and she described the awful pain that she has endured, so I know how important this is to the Japanese people. Meanwhile, our growing trilateral cooperation—with the Republic of Korea, as well as with Australia—gives us new opportunities to enhance security across the region.

With respect to trade, we reviewed the progress our teams have made towards the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I know that the politics around trade can be hard in both our countries. But I know that Prime Minister Abe, like me, is deeply committed to getting this done, and I'm confident we will. I often point out, for example, that there are many Japanese cars in America. I want to see more American cars in Japan as well. TPP will help level the playing field. It will be good for the workers of both our countries.

And moreover, TPP will have strong protections for workers and the environment and help us set high standards for trade in the 21st century. Japan and the United States both operate with high standards in our companies and our corporations. We try to be responsible when it comes to corporate citizenship. And high standards will be good for us and good for the region.

Based on the progress we've made, Prime Minister Abe and I discussed how the United States and Japan, as the two largest economies in the TPP negotiations, will now work together to lead our TPP partners to swift and successful conclusions of the broader negotiations.

We also agreed to continue our close coordination on climate change. As the two countries that have made the largest pledges to the Green Climate Fund, we're committed to helping nations around the world seize the opportunities of transitioning to low-carbon economies. And we discussed the importance of all major economies submitting ambitious targets to reduce emissions so we can reach a strong climate agreement this year in Paris.

And finally, we agreed to keep investing in our people so that they and our countries can reach their full potential. I want to once again commend the Prime Minister for his efforts to bring more Japanese women into the workforce. I can tell you, it is very much my view here in the United States and around the world that when women are given opportunity, when they are full-fledged members of the political community and the economic community, when they have opportunity, those countries succeed. It's good for everybody.

Along with the initiative we launched last year in Tokyo, we're also aiming to double student exchanges in the coming years. And with the leadership of our better halves—our wives—the United States and Japan are helping to lead our global initiative, "Let Girls Learn," to give more young women and girls access to education.

So these are just some examples of what it means to be true global partners. And I'm confident that with the steps that we've taken today, our alliance will play an even greater role in upholding security, prosperity, and human dignity, not just in the Asia-Pacific, but around the world.

So, Prime Minister Abe, *arigato gozaimasu*. Mr. Prime Minister.

*Prime Minister Abe.* Barack, thank you for inviting me to make an official visit in this commemorative year which marks 70 years after the war. Thank you for inviting me and my wife.

Walking together with you at the Lincoln Memorial, which has witnessed America tread the path of democracy, will be an extraordinary memory to be cherished. We have a dream: that is to create a world abound in peace and prosperity. To realize this common dream, Japan and the United States will together pave the way towards a new era.

I was able to confirm this strong resolve with President Obama in this milestone year of 70 years after the war. Today, we turned a new page in the history of the U.S.-Japan alliance, which exceeds half a century. This is a Japan-U.S. alliance within the context of the world. Japan and the United States are partners who share basic values, such as freedom, democracy, and basic human rights and the rule of law. The U.S.-Japan alliance characterized by the firmness of its bond is now indispensable to the peace and stability of not only the Asia-Pacific, but to the world.

We are united in our resoluteness in opposing unilateral attempts to change the status quo in whatever form. Any dispute should be resolved peacefully based on international law and not through coercion or intimidation. Japan welcomes the United States policy of rebalancing, which emphasizes the Asia-Pacific. And President Obama has expressed his support for Japan's principle of proactive contribution to peace. Through coordination of these two policies, the deterrence of our alliance will no doubt be further strengthened.

Against this backdrop, we have reaffirmed our resolve to steadily move forward with the realignment of the U.S. Forces in Japan. The dangers arising from the Futenma Air Station being surrounded by housing and schools should be eliminated by relocation to Henoko as soon as possible. We will move forward with mitigating the impact of the base in Okinawa, founded on a strong relationship of trust between Japan and the United States. It is prosperity that brings peace. These beliefs makes us eager to see the early conclusion of the TPP.

On the bilateral outstanding issues, we welcome the fact that significant progress was made. We will continue to cooperate to lead the TPP talks through its last phase. We've confirmed that we would work together for the early and successful conclusion of the talks.

In addition, with regard to the situation in East Asia, abduction by North Korea, nuclear missile issues, the situation in the Ukraine, the nuclear issue in Iran, and the threat of terrorism; furthermore, climate change, infectious and communicable diseases, the U.N. Security Council reform—the world has a multitude of issues facing it. And on these all sorts of issues, we have had a frank and candid exchange of views, and we agreed that we would cooperate.

When it comes to the future of Japan and the United States, there are infinite possibilities: energy, infrastructure, science and technology, space, and in addition to this, the empowerment of women. We agree—that is, between President Obama and myself—that we would cooperate and move forward in making investments for the future.

I would like to express my due heartfelt respect once again to President Obama and the citizens of the United States who have committed to take on the multiple—multitude of challenges of this world and for the unstinting efforts that you are making for the benefit of the peoples of the world.

Yesterday I visited the JFK Library in Boston. On television, I saw President Kennedy deliver his Inauguration speech; it deeply resonated with me, and it still has a lingering effect. I recall the following quote: "My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of mankind."

Now, Japan wants to be a country that can respond to such calls. Hand in hand, we want to work together with the United States to spread basic values throughout the world such as those of freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and the rule of law. And we want to be a country that can contribute to peace and prosperity of the world.

In visiting the United States, I've had a very heartwarming welcome and reception by all citizens of the United States. I'd like to express my heartfelt gratitude.

Lastly, I'd like to emphasize the following. Barack, as we stand here, we will be starting a new era for Japan and the United States. I think that 70 years from now, our children and grandchildren will look back on the talks we had as one of such historical significance. Thank you very much.

*President Obama.* [*Inaudible*]*—starting with Andrew Beatty of AFP.*

#### *Japan-U.S. Relations/China/South Korea*

*Q.* Thank you very much, Mr. President. First of all, I wanted to know if you think there's a risk in this more assertive U.S.-Japanese security stance, if you think there's a risk that it might be seen as a provocation in Beijing, Pyongyang, or heightened tension in the East China and South China Seas.

And for Mr. Abe, if I may: You stopped short of a full apology for Japan's actions during World War II, including with regard the estimated 200,000 women enslaved by Imperial Forces. Would you make an apology for that today? Thank you.

*President Obama.* I think it's very important to recognize that the U.S.-Japan alliance hasn't just been good for the United States and Japan, it's been good for the Asia-Pacific region and the world. The basic foundation of peace, stability, ensuring that territorial borders were respected, freedom of navigation—all that has underwritten the incredible growth that's taken place in the Asia-Pacific region. China has benefited from it. It's on that basis that China became an economic juggernaut that ended up being incorporated into global trade.

And so, no, we don't think that a strong U.S.-Japan alliance should be seen as a provocation. We should—it should be seen as a continuation of the important work that we've done to ensure that you have a stable area where there are diplomatic conflicts, a healthy economic competition, but largely, we've been able to maintain forward progress for a whole host of nations. And our treaty alliances have been critical to that. The U.S. serving as an Asia-Pacific power has been critical to that.

And as I've said before, we welcome China's peaceful rise. We think it's good not only because China is a booming potential market. We think it's good not only because it allows China potentially to share some burdens with us in helping countries that are not as far along develop. But we think it's just good that hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens have been able to rise out of poverty at incredible speed over the last several years. They could not have done that had it not been for a stable trading system and world order that is underwritten in large part by the work that our alliances do.

I think it is going to be important for us to continue to adapt to new challenges. So part of the goal here is that the same principles that the alliance was founded on continually update to concerns about cyber threats; that we are nimble and responsive to potential conflicts that may arise because of maritime disputes. But I think we have to do it in a way that brings in China and other countries into a common effort to maintain order and peace in the region.

And we are seeking to strengthen military-to-military cooperation with China even as we continue to upgrade our alliance efforts. Obviously, the Republic of Korea is a critical part of our alliance structure as well. And the trilateral work that we do is going to be also very, very important.

I don't want to minimize, though, the fact that there are some real tensions that have arisen with China around its approach to maritime issues and its claims. But that's not an issue that is arising as a consequence of the U.S.-Japan alliance. It's primarily a conflict between China and various claimants throughout East Asia and Southeast Asia in which they feel that rather than resolve these issues through normal international dispute settlements, they are flexing their muscles.

And we've said to China what we would say to any country in that circumstance: That's the wrong way to go about it. And we will continue to work with all countries in the region, starting with our treaty allies, to make sure that basic international norms continue to be observed.

*Prime Minister Abe.* On the issue of comfort women, I am deeply pained to think about the comfort women who experienced immeasurable pain and suffering as a result of victimization due to human trafficking. This is a feeling that I share equally with my predecessors. The Abe cabinet upholds the Kono statement and has no intention to revise it. Based on this position, Japan has made various efforts to provide realistic relief for the comfort women.

In—throughout the history of the 20th century, women's dignity and basic human rights had often been infringed upon during wars. We intend to make the 21st century a world with no human rights violations against women.

I promised at the General Assembly of the United Nations last year that Japan would stand at the fore and lead the international community in eliminating sexual violence during conflicts. For an international framework, including the U.N. Women, Japan provided approximately \$12 million in 2014 and decided that it would provide approximately \$22 million in 2015.

In any case, the 21st century should be an age where women's rights is never infringed upon. And it is—that is our strong resolve.

### *Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization/Japan's Defense Policy*

Q. Thank you very much. [*Inaudible*—from NHK. I'd like to address this question to Prime Minister Abe and President Obama. In the East China Sea and in the South China Sea, China continues to make forays into the oceans. And the Islamic State is still very active. How does the United States and Japan intend to collaborate?

And what do you expect of each other in terms of actions taken by the respective countries? In Japan, with regard to the acceptance of exercise of collective self-defense and the new guidelines, there is a strong concern that Japan will become involved in America's wars.

How does Prime Minister Abe intend to dispel those fears? And what is President Obama's take on these concerns?

*Prime Minister Abe.* First of all, on extremism and radicalism, which is on the rise, the world community should unite to counter such extremism. Moderation is the best method, is the speech I delivered in Cairo. We have to face extremism. There are moderates who are at the very forefront facing extremism, and we want to support this.

With the rise of extremism, there are refugees and support to these refugees. And also, through the influx of refugees, there are countries who are faced with difficulties. To these countries, it's important that we provide support appropriately. And to the moderate countries, we need to tell them that they are not alone, they are not isolated in the international society. The moderate countries should be supported, and we need to express that at all times. I believe that is important.

In the Middle East, there are people who are living there; improving the welfare and livelihood of these peoples are areas in which we'd like to make efforts. From such a standpoint, the United States and Japan would like to cooperate to respond to the challenges.

Another point. The defense guidelines and with regard to the security legislation that we may be involved, get caught up in wars—people tend to label this in some cases. It's very unfortunate. Labeling activities of this kind is not the first time it has occurred. In 1960, when we revised the security treaty, people—some people said that we would be involved in wars of the United States, and that was the core of the criticism which was aired then.

It's been 55 years since then. This criticism has been proved totally wrong, and that is very clear and evident. History has proved this. Our choice made at the time to revise the security treaty. And in case Japan suffers from aggression between Japan and the United States, we would respond through cooperation.

And in the Far East, to maintain security, Japan's facilities would be leveraged, and U.S. military would leverage these facilities to conduct activities. Through such activities, Japan's safety would be—was protected, and prosperity happened, and safety in Asian—the Asia-Pacific has been maintained.

To further strengthen this trend is provided for through the new guidelines, and seamless response is made possible. And by so doing, deterrence would be enhanced. Japan-U.S. alliance would be more efficient and more functional. Deterrence and response capabilities would be heightened as a result. And this would lead to peace and prosperity of Japan and regional peace and prosperity as well. This is my firm conviction.

In the streamlining of the laws, I should like to explain to the citizens—and the Parliament—in a detailed fashion.

*President Obama.* Ultimately, the people of Japan and their elected representatives will be making decisions about how best to approach their defense. But I think it's important to note, as Prime Minister Abe said, that we have seen over multiple decades now that Japan is a peace-loving country, having absorbed some very difficult lessons from the past; Japan does not engage in aggression on the international stage or in its region; and that the alliance that has been built with the United States is principally one that seeks to defend our countries from potential attack or aggression. And what the new defense guidelines and the collective defense approach that Prime Minister Abe is proposing simply upgrades our ability to carry out those core functions.

We do share, as people in countries all around the world share, a determination to eliminate the kind of barbaric terrorist acts perpetrated by organizations like ISIL that have resulted in the death of innocent citizens from the United States, from Japan, from other countries, and most of all, from Muslim countries. And that's why we have a broad-based coalition designed to defeat ISIL. And we will continue to work with a wide range of countries around the world in our counterterrorism efforts.

Japan's cooperation in that is vital and appreciated, but there are many ways in which coalition members participate. Japan's willingness and commitment to provide humanitarian assistance makes an enormous difference in countries that have been destabilized. Japan's willingness to serve in areas of peacekeeping and working with other countries to rebuild after they've been destroyed makes a big difference.

So I think it's important to recognize we do not expect some instant and major transformation in terms of how Japan projects military power, but we do expect that Japan, like all of our allies and like ourselves, will continue to adapt to new threats, understanding that our basic core principle is not territorial ambition, it's not aggression towards others, but it is simply to defend prosperity and liberty and the sovereignty of countries, as we have done for a very long time now, as we have done together for a very long time.

Chris Jansing [NBC News].

*Trans-Pacific Partnership/Civil Unrest in Baltimore, MD/Community-Oriented Policing/Criminal Justice Reform/Poverty/Economic Development*

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. As you know, the National Guard is now on the streets of Baltimore, the latest aftermath in a series of what have been high-profile confrontations between Black men and police officers. And there seems to be growing frustration among African American leaders that not enough is being done quickly enough. Marc Morial of the Urban League said, "The U.S. is in a state of emergency of tremendous proportions." The president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund says, "We are in the throes of a national crisis."

Are we in the throes of a national crisis? What are you prepared to do about it, both in terms of Baltimore and the larger picture? And what do you say to critics who say that since the death of Trayvon Martin, you have not been aggressive enough in your response?

And to Prime Minister Abe, how important is a Pacific trade deal to keeping the influence of China in check, both economically and militarily? And do you agree with President Obama when he says that failing to complete a deal will simply further China's influence? Thank you.

*President Obama.* Before I answer the question about Baltimore, I'm going to horn in on your question to Prime Minister Abe.

I've been very clear that TPP is good for American businesses and American workers, regardless of what China is doing. And we will make the case on the merits as to why it will open up markets for American goods, American exports, and create American jobs. So this is not simply a defensive agreement, this is something that is going to be part and parcel of our broader economic agenda moving forward. And when 95 percent of the world's markets are outside our shores, we've got to make sure that we're out there competing. And I'm confident we can compete.

With respect to Baltimore, let me make a couple of points. First, obviously, our thoughts continue to be with the family of Freddie Gray. Understandably, they want answers. And DOJ

has opened an investigation. It is working with local law enforcement to find out exactly what happened, and I think there should be full transparency and accountability.

Second, my thoughts are with the police officers who were injured in last night's disturbances. It underscores that that's a tough job, and we have to keep that in mind, and my hope is that they can heal and get back to work as soon as possible.

Point number three: There's no excuse for the kind of violence that we saw yesterday. It is counterproductive. When individuals get crowbars and start prying open doors to loot, they're not protesting, they're not making a statement. They're stealing. When they burn down a building, they're committing arson. And they're destroying and undermining businesses and opportunities in their own communities that rob jobs and opportunity from people in that area.

So it is entirely appropriate that the mayor of Baltimore, who I spoke to yesterday, and the Governor, who I spoke to yesterday, work to stop that kind of senseless violence and destruction. That is not a protest. That is not a statement. It's people—a handful of people—taking advantage of a situation for their own purposes, and they need to be treated as criminals.

Point number four: The violence that happened yesterday distracted from the fact that you had seen multiple days of peaceful protests that were focused on entirely legitimate concerns of these communities in Baltimore, led by clergy and community leaders. And they were constructive, and they were thoughtful, and frankly, it didn't get that much attention. And one burning building will be looped on television over and over and over again, and the thousands of demonstrators who did it the right way, I think, have been lost in the discussion.

The overwhelming majority of the community in Baltimore, I think, have handled this appropriately, expressing real concern and outrage over the possibility that our laws were not applied evenly in the case of Mr. Gray and that accountability needs to exist. And I think we have to give them credit. My understanding is, is you've got some of the same organizers now going back into these communities to try to clean up in the aftermath of a handful of protesters—a handful of criminals and thugs who tore up the place. What they were doing, what those community leaders and clergy and others were doing, that is a statement. That's the kind of organizing that needs to take place if we're going to tackle this problem. And they deserve credit for it, and we should be lifting them up.

Point number five—and I've got six—[laughter]—because this is important: Since Ferguson and the Task Force that we put together, we have seen too many instances of what appears to be police officers interacting with individuals—primarily African American, often poor—in ways that have raised troubling questions. And it comes up, it seems like, once a week now, or once every couple of weeks. And so I think it's pretty understandable why the leaders of civil rights organizations, but more importantly, moms and dads across the country, might start saying this is a crisis. What I'd say is, this has been a slow-rolling crisis. This has been going on for a long time. This is not new, and we shouldn't pretend that it's new.

The good news is, is that perhaps there's some newfound awareness because of social media and video cameras and so forth that there are problems and challenges when it comes to how policing and our laws are applied in certain communities, and we have to pay attention to it and respond.

What's also good news is, the Task Force that was made up of law enforcement and community activists that we brought together here in the White House have come up with very constructive concrete proposals that, if adopted by local communities and by States and by counties, by law enforcement generally, would make a difference. It wouldn't solve every



problem, but would make a concrete difference in rebuilding trust and making sure that the overwhelming majority of effective, honest, and fair law enforcement officers, that they're able to do their job better because it will weed out or retrain or put a stop to those handful who may be not doing what they're supposed to be doing.

Now, the challenge for us, as the Federal Government is, is that we don't run these police forces. I can't federalize every police force in the country and force them to retrain. But what I can do is to start working with them collaboratively so that they can begin this process of change themselves.

And we—coming out of the Task Force that we put together, we're now working with local communities. The Department of Justice has just announced a grant program for those jurisdictions that want to purchase body cameras. We are going to be issuing grants for those jurisdictions that are prepared to start trying to implement some of the new training and data collection and other things that can make a difference. And we're going to keep on working with those local jurisdictions so that they can begin to make the changes that are necessary.

I think it's going to be important for organizations like the Fraternal Order of Police and other police unions and organizations to acknowledge that this is not good for police. We have to own up to the fact that occasionally there are going to be problems here, just as there are in every other occupation. There are some bad politicians who are corrupt. There are folks in the business community or on Wall Street who don't do the right thing. Well, there's some police who aren't doing the right thing. And rather than close ranks, what we've seen is a number of thoughtful police chiefs and commissioners and others recognize, they got to get their arms around this thing and work together with the community to solve the problem. And we're committed to facilitating that process.

So the heads of our COPS agency that helps with community policing, they're already out in Baltimore. Our head—Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division is already out in Baltimore. But we're going to be working systematically with every city and jurisdiction around the country to try to help them implement some solutions that we know work.

And I'll make my final point. I'm sorry, Mr. Prime Minister, but this is a pretty important issue for us.

We can't just leave this to the police. I think there are police departments that have to do some soul searching. I think there are some communities that have to do some soul searching. But I think we, as a country, have to do some soul searching. This is not new. It's been going on for decades.

And without making any excuses for criminal activities that take place in these communities, what we also know is that if you have impoverished communities that have been stripped away of opportunity, where children are born into abject poverty; they've got parents—often because of substance abuse problems or incarceration or lack of education themselves—can't do right by their kids; if it's more likely that those kids end up in jail or dead than that they go to college; in communities where there are no fathers who can provide guidance to young men; communities that—where there's no investment and manufacturing has been stripped away and drugs have flooded the community and the drug industry ends up being the primary employer for a whole lot of folks—in those environments, if we think that we're just going to send the police to do the dirty work of containing the problems that arise there without, as a nation and as a society, saying, "What can we do to change those communities, to help lift up those communities and give those kids opportunity?" then we're

not going to solve this problem. And we'll go through the same cycles of periodic conflicts between the police and communities and the occasional riots in the streets, and everybody will feign concern until it goes away, and then we go about our business as usual.

If we are serious about solving this problem, then we're going to not only have to help the police, we're going to have to think about what can we do—the rest of us—to make sure that we're providing early education to these kids; to make sure that we're reforming our criminal justice system so it's not just a pipeline from schools to prisons; so that we're not rendering men in these communities unemployable because of a felony record for a nonviolent drug offense; that we're making investments so that they can get the training they need to find jobs. That's hard. That requires more than just the occasional news report or Task Force. And there's a bunch of my agenda that would make a difference right now in that.

Now, I'm under no illusion that out of this Congress we're going to get massive investments in urban communities, and so we'll try to find areas where we can make a difference around school reform and around job training and around some investments in infrastructure in these communities and trying to attract new businesses in.

But if we really want to solve the problem, if our society really wanted to solve the problem, we could. It's just, it would require everybody saying this is important, this is significant, and that we don't just pay attention to these communities when a CVS burns and we don't just pay attention when a young man gets shot or has his spine snapped. We're paying attention all the time because we consider those kids our kids and we think they're important and they shouldn't be living in poverty and violence.

That's how I feel. I think there are a lot of good-meaning people around the country that feel that way. But that kind of political mobilization, I think, we haven't seen in quite some time. And what I've tried to do is to promote those ideas that would make a difference. But I think we all understand that the politics of that are tough, because it's easy to ignore those problems or to treat them just as a law-and-order issue, as opposed to a broader social issue.

That was a really long answer, but I felt pretty strongly about it.

*Prime Minister Abe.* First of all, on TPP, this is not something that we create out of consciousness about China. The economic growth of the region will be a positive and create opportunities for Japan, the United States, and the world. The TPP is such that to the eyes of many countries, it has to become a model. It should be a model for China in that it's an ambitious attempt to create a new economic sphere in which people, goods, and money will flow freely within the Asia-Pacific region. It's a new economic region of freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and rule of law.

With countries that share these universal values, we will be creating new rules. And this will benefit regional prosperity, and it also has a strategic significance related to regional stability.

On these points, we see completely eye to eye between President Obama and myself. The early conclusion of TPP, by achieving this, this will work on other countries—nonmembers of the TPP—to follow rules. And I believe that this will lead to prosperity.

#### *Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank/Trans-Pacific Partnership*

Q. [*Inaudible*—from Kyoto Press. My question addressed—is addressed to Prime Minister Abe, as well as President Obama. In relation to the answer that has been given, China is working toward the establishment of the AIIB, and it intends to enhance its influence in the

international economy and finance. What is the strategic significance of the early conclusion of the TPP?

And the next question is to President Obama. Do you have confidence, or how do you intend to work on Congress to pass the TPP-related bills? And how confident are you that you'll be able to pass this bill?

*Prime Minister Abe.* On the TPP, as I mentioned in my answer previously, in the Asia-Pacific region, this is a region where growth is very prominent. And in such a region, for people and goods and money under proper rules to flow freely, without a doubt, will make affluent the countries participating in the TPP, in the Asia-Pacific. And the people in the countries will be able to lead affluent lives. I believe this will feed into this.

So for this purpose as well, as soon as possible, with the general public's understanding, toward early conclusion of the TPP, we'd like to make efforts. And in this context, Japan and the United States—or with President Barack Obama and myself—we want to exert leadership to bring about an early conclusion of the TPP.

Furthermore, on the AIIB, in Asia there's a tremendous demand for infrastructure, and the financial system to respond to this is very important. On this recognition, we see eye to eye between China and myself, and I think this is a point on which we see eye to eye between many countries.

For Japan to participate in the AIIB is a decision that which we have not taken yet. But to create such an enormous financial institution and since this will have an enormous impact on Asian countries, a fair governance is necessary of the institution. In particular, the board to review individual projects and to approve of this is indispensable. And that sustainability and the environment and society and the impact of this should be considered. We need to secure this.

It's not only about the lenders, but the borrowing nations. For example, various infrastructure projects may not be sustainable. It may have too much of a burden on the environment. If this is the case, this will be a very negative—bring negative results for the citizens living in the countries. It will prove to be a burden. And so in that sense, a proper review as to whether lending the money to a country will be of benefit to the country. Rigorous review is very important.

So from such a standpoint, the two points to be secured, I believe, is very important. So from such a standpoint, Japan and the United States should cooperate, and we need to continue dialogue with China, and it is my intention to do so.

*President Obama.* Let me agree with Prime Minister Abe when it comes to the Asian Infrastructure Bank proposal that's been made by China.

Asia needs infrastructure. There are a lot of countries that have difficulty financing infrastructure, but if they got that infrastructure put in place and developed, they can grow much more rapidly. And that's good for everybody. It's good for that country. It's good for the world economy. It's good for us. We want more markets to be able to get our goods in and sell our services that are some of the best in the world. And China has got a lot of money. It's been running a big surplus for quite some time. So to the extent that China wants to put capital into development projects around the region, that's a positive. That's a good thing.

So let me be very clear and dispel this notion that we were opposed or are opposed to other countries participating in the Asia Infrastructure Bank. That is simply not true. It sprung

up out of one story after the Brits decided that they were going to join up, and then folks have just been running with it. And there have been all these editorials subsequently based on these reports, not from any official position of the United States Government, but from a series of behind-the-scenes quotes.

What we have said and what we've said to all the other countries involved is exactly what Prime Minister Abe said, which is, if we're going to have a multilateral lending institution, then you have to have some guidelines by which it's going to operate. That's how the World Bank operates. That's how the IMF operates. There may be weighted votes in terms of who's the biggest contributor, but you've got to have some transparency in terms of how the thing is going to operate, because if not, a number of things can happen. Number one, money could end up flowing that is misused, or it doesn't have high accounting standards, and we don't know what happens to money that is going into projects.

As Prime Minister Abe said, the projects themselves may not be well designed. They may be very good for the leaders of some countries and contractors, but may not be good for the actual people who live there. And the reason I can say that is because, in the past, some of the efforts of multilateral institutions that the United States set up didn't always do right by the actual people in those countries. And we learned some lessons from that, and we got better at making sure that we were listening to the community and thinking about how this would affect the environment and whether it was sustainable.

And so our simple point to everybody in these conversations around the Asia Infrastructure Bank is, let's just make sure that we're running it based on best practices, based on what we've learned from the entire postwar era and how other multilateral financing mechanisms have worked.

And if in fact the Asia Infrastructure Bank that is being set up ends up having those kinds of safeguards, is run in a way that ultimately is actually going to lead to good infrastructure and benefit the borrowing countries, then we're all for it. And we look forward to collaborating with the Asia Infrastructure Bank, just like we do with the Asia Development Bank and with the World Bank on a whole bunch of stuff. So this could be a positive thing.

But if it's not run well, then it could be a negative thing. And what we don't want to do is just be participating in something and providing cover for an institution that does not end up doing right by its people. Because when these countries borrow money, even from a development bank, for a boondoggle project that doesn't work, they're oftentimes still on the hook for paying that money back. And there have been experiences like that across continents and across decades.

With respect to TPP, it's never fun passing a trade bill in this town and—because people are understandably concerned about its potential impacts on specific industries, but also the general concerns that people have had about globalization and technology displacing workers. We're addressing those systematically. Here's what I'm confident about: This will end up being the most progressive trade bill in history. It will have the kinds of labor and environmental and human rights protections that have been absent in previous agreements. It's going to be enforceable. It's going to open up markets that currently are not fully open to U.S. businesses. It's going to be good for the U.S. economy.

And because I always believe that good policy ends up being good politics, I'm confident we're going to end up getting the votes in Congress. And Congress, by the way, will have a lot of time to review it when and if it's actually completed. So this whole notion that it's all secret,

they're going to have 60 days before I even sign it to look at the text and then a number of months after that before they have to take a final vote.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Sakie Yokota, mother of Megumi Yokota, a Japanese citizen who was abducted by North Korean authorities in 1977; Akie Abe, wife of Prime Minister Abe; Freddie C. Gray Jr., who died on April 19 as a result of injuries sustained following an arrest by Baltimore, MD, police officers on April 12; Mayor Stephanie C. Rawlings-Blake of Baltimore, MD; Gov. Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. of Maryland; Ronald L. Davis, Director, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS); and Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Vanita Gupta. A reporter referred to Marc H. Morial, president and chief executive officer, National Urban League; and Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. Prime Minister Abe and two reporters spoke in Japanese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Joint news conferences :: Japan, Prime Minister Abe.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Abe, Akie; Abe, Shinzo; Davis, Ronald L.; Gray, Freddie C., Jr.; Gupta, Vanita; Hogan, Lawrence J., Jr.; Rawlings-Blake, Stephanie C.; Yokota, Megumi; Sakie Yokota.

*Subjects:* ; Africa : West Africa, Ebola epidemic, response and containment efforts; Asia : East China Sea, maritime territorial disputes; Asia : Regional infrastructure investment bank; Asia : Relations with U.S.; Asia : South China Sea, maritime territorial disputes; Business and industry : Corporate responsibility; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; China : Economic growth and development; China : Relations with U.S.; China : Security cooperation with U.S.; Civil rights : Minorities :: Relations with police; Civil rights : Women's rights and gender equality; Commerce, international : Environmental protection standards; Commerce, international : Labor protection standards; Commerce, international : U.S. exports :: Expansion; Communications : News media, Presidential interviews; Defense and national security : Cybersecurity :: Strengthening efforts; Drug abuse and trafficking : Decriminalization and legalization; Economy, national : Poverty :: Efforts to combat; Education : Early childhood education programs; Education : Foreign exchange programs; Education : Standards and school accountability; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Job training and assistance programs; Environment : Carbon emissions; Environment : Climate change; Iraq : Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization; Japan : Counterterrorism efforts, cooperation with U.S.; Japan : Defense relationship with U.S. ; Japan : Defense relationship with U.S.; Japan : Prime Minister; Japan : Relations with U.S.; Japan : Student exchanges with U.S.; Japan : Trade with U.S.; Justice, Department of : Civil Rights, Assistant Attorney General for; Justice, Department of : Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program; Law enforcement and crime : 21st-Century Policing, President's Task Force on; Law enforcement and crime : Community-oriented policing, strengthening efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Criminal justice system, reform efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Fraternal Order of Police; Law enforcement and crime : Sentencing requirements, reform; Law enforcement and crime : State and community law enforcement agencies, Federal support; Maryland : Baltimore :: Civil unrest; Maryland : Baltimore :: Death of Freddie C. Gray, Jr.; Maryland : Governor; Missouri :

Civil unrest in Ferguson; Monetary Fund, International; Nepal : Earthquake, damage and recovery efforts; North Korea : Japanese citizens, abduction; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development; Russia : Relations with Ukraine; South Korea : Relations with U.S.; Terrorism : Counterterrorism efforts; Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); Transportation : Infrastructure, national, improvement efforts; Ukraine : Russia, role; United Nations : Framework Convention on Climate Change; Women and girls : "Let Girls Learn" initiative, White House; World Bank.

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