

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:10 p.m. on February 3 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on February 4. The

transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 3, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 4.

## Statement on the Situation in Syria *February 4, 2012*

Thirty years after his father massacred tens of thousands of innocent Syrian men, women, and children in Hama, Bashar al-Asad has demonstrated a similar disdain for human life and dignity. Yesterday the Syrian Government murdered hundreds of Syrian citizens, including women and children, in Homs through shelling and other indiscriminate violence, and Syrian forces continue to prevent hundreds of injured civilians from seeking medical help. These brutal killings take place at a time when so many Syrians are also marking a deeply meaningful day for their faith. I strongly condemn the Syrian Government's unspeakable assault against the people of Homs, and I offer my deepest sympathy to those who have lost loved ones. Asad must halt his campaign of killing and crimes against his own people now. He must step aside and allow a democratic transition to proceed immediately.

The Syrian people demonstrated in large numbers across Syria yesterday to participate in peaceful protests commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Hama massacre. They labeled the protests, "We are Sorry, Hama—Forgive Us." We owe it to the victims of Hama and Homs to learn one lesson: that cruelty must be confronted for the sake of justice and human dignity. Every government has the responsibility to protect its citizens, and any government that brutalizes and massacres its people does not deserve to govern. The Syrian regime's policy of maintaining power by terroriz-

ing its people only indicates its inherent weakness and inevitable collapse. Asad has no right to lead Syria and has lost all legitimacy with his people and the international community.

The international community must work to protect the Syrian people from this abhorrent brutality. Earlier this week, our Arab partners called on U.N. Security Council members to take action to support a political solution to the crisis in Syria and stop Asad's "killing machine." The Council now has an opportunity to stand against the Asad regime's relentless brutality and to demonstrate that it is a credible advocate for the universal rights that are written into the U.N. Charter.

We must work with the Syrian people toward building a brighter future for Syria. A Syria without Asad could be a Syria in which all Syrians are subject to the rule of law and where minorities are able to exercise their legitimate rights and uphold their identities and traditions while acting as fully enfranchised citizens in a unified republic. The United States and our international partners support the Syrian people in achieving their aspirations and will continue to assist the Syrian people toward that goal. We will help because we stand for principles that include universal rights for all people and just political and economic reform. The suffering citizens of Syria must know: We are with you, and the Asad regime must come to an end.

## Message to the Congress on Blocking Property of the Government of Iran and Iranian Financial Institutions *February 5, 2012*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the International Emergency

Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes addi-

tional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

In Executive Order 12957, the President found that the actions and policies of the Government of Iran threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. To deal with that threat, the President in Executive Order 12957 declared a national emergency and imposed prohibitions on certain transactions with respect to the development of Iranian petroleum resources. To further respond to that threat, Executive Order 12959 of May 6, 1995, imposed comprehensive trade and financial sanctions on Iran. Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997, consolidated and clarified the previous orders. To take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12957 and to implement section 105(a) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) (22 U.S.C. 8501 *et seq.*) (CISADA), I issued Executive Order 13553 on September 28, 2010, to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other persons acting on behalf of the Government of Iran determined to be responsible for or complicit in certain serious human rights abuses. To take further additional steps with respect to the threat posed by Iran and to provide implementing authority for a number of the sanctions set forth in the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172) (50 U.S.C. 1701 note) (ISA), as amended by CISADA, I issued Executive Order 13574 on May 23, 2011, to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to implement certain sanctions imposed by the Secretary of State pursuant to ISA, as amended by CISADA. Finally, to take additional steps with respect to the threat posed by Iran, I issued Executive Order 13590 on November 20, 2011, to authorize the Secretary of State to impose sanctions on persons providing certain goods, services, technology, information, or support that contribute either to Iran’s development of petroleum resources or to Iran’s production of petrochemicals, and to authorize the Secretary of

the Treasury to implement some of those sanctions.

I have determined that additional sanctions are warranted, particularly in light of the deceptive practices of the Central Bank of Iran and other Iranian banks to conceal transactions of sanctioned parties, the deficiencies in Iran’s anti-money laundering regime and the weaknesses in its implementation, and the continuing and unacceptable risk posed to the international financial system by Iran’s activities.

The order also implements section 1245(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81) (NDAA) by blocking the property and interests in property of Iranian financial institutions pursuant to IEEPA.

The order blocks the property and interests in property of the following:

- The Government of Iran, including the Central Bank of Iran;
- Any Iranian financial institution, including the Central Bank of Iran; and
- Persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

The prohibitions of the order do not apply to property and interests in property of the Government of Iran that were blocked pursuant to Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979, and thereafter made subject to the transfer directives set forth in Executive Order 12281 of January 19, 1981, and implementing regulations thereunder. In addition, nothing in the order prohibits transactions for the conduct of the official business of the Federal Government by employees, grantees, or contractors thereof.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations,

and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the blocking-related purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I have also delegated certain functions and authorities conferred by section 1245 of the NDAA to the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of State in consultation with other appropriate agencies as specified in the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
February 5, 2012.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 6. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Remarks at the White House Science Fair February 7, 2012

Thank you, everybody. Everybody, have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House Science Fair. It is—I just spent some time checking out some of the projects that were brought here today, and I’ve got to say, this is fun. It’s not every day that you have robots running all over your house. *[Laughter]* I am trying to figure out how you got through the metal detectors. I also shot a marshmallow through a air gun, which was very exciting. *[Laughter]*

Science is what got several of our guests where they are today, so I just want to make a couple of introductions. We’ve got a real-life astronaut and the head of NASA, Charles Bolden, in the house. We have the Administrator of the EPA; Lisa Jackson is here. The Director of the National Science Foundation, Subra Suresh, is here. My science—there’s Subra, over here. My science adviser, John Holdren, is in the house. We’ve got a couple of people who’ve dedicated themselves to making science cool for young people. We’ve got Neil deGrasse Tyson and Bill Nye the Science Guy.

Now, it is fitting that this year’s fair is happening just 2 days after the Super Bowl. I want to congratulate the New York Giants and all their fans. I just talked to Coach Coughlin; I’m looking forward to having the Giants here at the White House so we can celebrate their achievements. But what I’ve also said—I’ve said this many times—is if we are recognizing athletic achievement, then we should also be

recognizing academic achievement and science achievement. If we invite the team that wins the Super Bowl to the White House, then we need to invite some science fair winners to the White House as well.

Now I’m going to talk about how great all of you are in a second. But before I do, I want to give the parents a big round of applause, because they work hard to help you succeed, and I know this is their day. They’re really proud of you. As a parent, I know that seeing your kids do extraordinary things is—brings the greatest happiness that a parent can have. So congratulations to all the parents of all these incredible young people.

But parents aren’t the only ones who helped you get this far. Every one of you can think of a teacher, or maybe a couple of teachers, without whom you would not be here. So I want you to promise that the next time you see those teachers, that you give them a big thank you, not just for yourselves, but also from me. Because teachers matter, they deserve our support, and I want to make sure that we are constantly lifting up how important teachers are to making sure that not only you succeed, but this country succeeds. So give teachers a big round of applause.

Now, as I was walking around the Science Fair, I was thinking back to when I was your age. And basically, you guys put me to shame. *[Laughter]* What impresses me so much is not