

confident in their ability to meet their challenges, but we are supportive of their efforts.

This morning I updated you on the progress we made last night in our discussion of security issues. And today, following our discussion of the economy, we also made progress on a range of other important challenges. We discussed the importance of pursuing an all-of-the-above strategy for energy security in a safe and sustainable way. Leaders agreed to join a new U.S.-led coalition to address climate change, in part by reducing short-lived pollutants. And in the face of increasing disruptions in the supply of oil, we agreed that we must closely monitor global energy markets. Together, we stand ready to call upon the International Energy Agency to take action to ensure that the market remains fully and timely supplied.

We also announced a new alliance on food security with African leaders and the private sector as part of an effort to lift 50 million people out of poverty over the next decade. We discussed our support for a sustainable Afghan

economy as we wind down the war, and we reaffirmed our support for the democratic transitions underway in the Middle East and North Africa.

So I'm very pleased that we were able to make some important progress here at Camp David, and we're going to keep at it. Tomorrow we begin our NATO summit in my hometown of Chicago, where we'll discuss our plans to responsibly end the war in Afghanistan. Next week, European leaders will gather to discuss their next steps on the euro zone. Next month, we'll all have the chance to continue this collaboration at the G-20 in Mexico. And I look forward to building on this progress in promoting economic recovery in the weeks and months to come.

Thank you very much, everybody. I hope you've enjoyed the great views and the great weather.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:04 p.m. in the Aspen Lodge.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan and an Exchange With Reporters in Chicago, Illinois May 20, 2012

President Obama. It is a great pleasure to welcome President Karzai to my hometown of Chicago after he extended hospitality to me during my visit to Kabul recently. During that trip to Afghanistan, we were able to finalize the strategic partnership agreement that reflects a future in which two sovereign nations—the United States and Afghanistan—are operating as partners to the benefit of our countries' citizens, but also for the benefit of peace and security and stability in the region and around the world.

I want to thank President Karzai for his cooperation, and his delegation's hard work in helping us to achieve the strategic partnership agreement. And the NATO summit is going to be largely devoted to ratifying and reflecting the broad consensus that so many of our partners and ISAF members have agreed to; one in which we are working with the Afghans over

the next several years to achieve a complete transition to Afghan lead for Afghan security, one in which we continue to provide support for the Afghan National Security Forces that have made excellent progress over the last several years, and also painting a vision post-2014 in which we have ended our combat role, the Afghan war as we understand it is over, but our commitment to friendship and partnership with Afghanistan continues.

And so the strategic partnership agreement, this NATO summit, are all part and parcel of a shared vision that we have in which Afghanistan is able to transition from decades of war to a transformational decade of peace and stability and development. And so I just want to stress my appreciation for the hard work that President Karzai has done. I think he recognizes the enormous sacrifices that have been made by the American people and, most pro-

foundly, by American troops, as well as the troops of our other coalition partners. We recognize the hardship that the Afghan people have been through during these many, many years of war. Both of us recognize that we still have a lot of work to do, and there will be great challenges ahead. The loss of life continues in Afghanistan; there will be hard days ahead. But we're confident that we are on the right track, and what this NATO summit reflects is that the world is behind the strategy that we've laid out.

Now it's our task to implement it effectively. And I believe that we can do so, in part because of the tremendous strength and resilience of the Afghan people. I think they desperately want peace and security and development. And so long as they're reflecting that resilience and that hope for a better future, they will have a friend in the United States of America.

So, President Karzai, welcome. I am confident this will be a productive NATO summit, and I'm looking forward to continuing to work to implement the plans that we've laid out.

President Karzai. Great. Thank you, Mr. President. We have had a good meeting today in which Afghanistan reaffirmed its commitment to the transition process and to the completion of it in 2013 and the completion of withdrawal of our partners in 2014, so that Afghanistan is no longer a burden on the shoulder of our friends in the international community, on the shoulders of the United States and our other allies.

Afghanistan, indeed, Mr. President, as you very rightly put it, is looking forward to an end to this war and a transformational decade in which Afghanistan will be working further for institution building and the development of sounder governance in the country and a better economy, where the Afghans will be taking steady steps towards self-reliance in all aspects of life, that Afghanistan will be collecting its own revenues.

But in the meantime, that the world community, in particular the United States and our allies in NATO and ISAF, will be with us to make sure that we take steady and strong steps and are back while you are making those steps towards 2024, when Afghanistan will be largely defending itself and providing for itself.

Mr. President, the partnership that we signed a few weeks ago in Kabul has turned a new page in our relations. And the new page is a page of two sovereign countries working together for the mutual interests: peace and security and in all other areas of concentration.

Mr. President, I'm bringing to you and to the people of the United States the gratitude of the Afghan people for the support that your taxpayers' money has provided Afghanistan over the past decade and for the difference that it has made to the well-being of the Afghan people, to our education and health and the building of the Afghan Government.

Mr. President, Afghanistan is fully aware of the task ahead and of what Afghanistan needs to do to reach the objectives that we all have of a stable, peaceful, and self-reliant Afghanistan.

In the meantime, until then, thank you for your support.

President Obama. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you. Thank you so much.

International Assistance to Afghanistan

Q. Mr. President, will you get the financial support needed to hit that \$4.1 billion? Are you confident about that?

President Obama. We'll have a press conference.

Q. Okay, thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. at McCormick Place convention center. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.