

Weekly Address: Standing Strong in the Face of Terrorism

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December 12, 2015

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

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WASHINGTON, DC — In this week's address, the President praised our country's resilience in the face of terrorism, and discussed how we will keep America safe. Our military has been stepping up its campaign to destroy ISIL, and our airstrikes are hitting ISIL harder than ever before. The President emphasized that we will continue to move forward on all fronts, which is why this week he will go to the Pentagon to review our military campaign, and to the National Counterterrorism center to review our efforts to prevent attacks. And he reminded us that we all have a part to play in the fight against terrorism — potential terrorist attacks have been prevented over the years because someone saw something and said something. Americans should not turn against one another by letting this fight be defined as a war between America and Islam, which is what ISIL wants and only serves to undermine our national security. The President praised Americans across the country who have come together to reaffirm our core values and stand up, forcefully, for freedom of religion.

[Learn more at wh.gov/isil](http://wh.gov/isil) to learn more about the U.S. strategy to defeat ISIL and combat terrorism.

[MP4](#)[MP3](#)

Remarks of President Barack Obama

Weekly Address

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Hello, everybody. This week, Americans across our country have shown what it means to be strong in the face of terrorism. In San Bernardino, even as the community continues to grieve, people are refusing to be ruled by fear. Across the county, dedicated public servants are on the job — and more will be returning to work this week. Faith communities have come together in fellowship and prayer. Families lined the streets for the annual children's Christmas parade—because we can't let terrorists change how we live our lives.

Meanwhile, our men and women in uniform are stepping up our campaign to destroy ISIL. Our airstrikes are hitting ISIL harder than ever, in Iraq and Syria. We're taking out more of their fighters and leaders, their weapons, their oil tankers. Our Special

Operations Forces are on the ground—because we’re going to hunt down these terrorists wherever they try to hide. In recent weeks, our strikes have taken out the ISIL finance chief, a terrorist leader in Somalia and the ISIL leader in Libya. Our message to these killers is simple—we will find you, and justice will be done.

This week, we’ll move forward on all fronts. On Monday, I’ll go to the Pentagon. And there, I’ll review our military campaign and how we can continue to accelerate our efforts. Later in the week, I’ll go to the National Counterterrorism Center. There, I’ll review our efforts—across our entire government—to prevent attacks and protect our homeland. And this week, the Department of Homeland Security will update its alert system to ensure Americans get more information, including steps that you and your communities can take to be vigilant and to stay safe.

In the wake of the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, I know a lot of Americans are asking—“what can I do?” First, as always, we have to stay vigilant. If you see something that seems suspicious, say something to law enforcement. Over the years, plots have been uncovered because someone saw something and spoke up.

As I said in my speech last weekend, one of the most important things we can do is to stay true to who we are as Americans. Terrorists like ISIL are trying to divide us along lines of religion and background. That’s how they stoke fear. That’s how they recruit. And just as Muslims around the world have to keep rejecting any twisted interpretation of Islam, all of us have to reject bigotry—in all of its forms. I’ll say it again, prejudice and discrimination helps ISIL and it undermines our national security.

The good news is that Americans are coming together to reaffirm the core values that keep us strong. Political leaders across the spectrum—Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives—are standing up, forcefully, for freedom of religion. Churches and synagogues are reaching out to local mosques—reminding us that we are all God’s children. Grateful citizens are saying thank you to our patriotic Muslim American service members and veterans. Some of our greatest sports heroes have reminded us why they’re true champions—and voices for tolerance and understanding. Across the country, Americans are reaching out—to their Muslim friends, neighbors and coworkers—to let them know we’re here for each other. I think of the woman in Texas carrying a sign saying, “We love our Muslim neighbors.”

That’s the message I hope every Muslim American hears—that we’re all part of the same American family. And it’s a message all of us can deliver—parents to our children, teachers to their students, leaders in politics and business and entertainment. Back in San Bernardino, people from across the community have joined in prayer vigils—Christians, Jews, Muslims and others. They’ve sent a powerful message—we’re all in this together. That’s the spirit we have to uphold. That’s what we can do—as Americans—united in defense of the country that we love.

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