

Search WhiteHouse.gov

**The White House**

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 02, 2010

**Weekly Address: President Obama Outlines Steps Taken to Protect the Safety and Security of the American People**

WASHINGTON – In his weekly address, President Barack Obama discussed his solemn responsibility to protect the nation and the steps the administration has taken to that end. From ordering reviews into the attempted act of terrorism in Detroit to a comprehensive strategy that has refocused our efforts on the fight against al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan and strengthened international partnerships to keep unrelenting pressure on extremists across the globe, the President will continue to do everything in his power to uphold the nation's security.

The audio and video will be available online at [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

**Remarks of President Barack Obama  
Weekly Address  
January 2, 2010**

It has now been more than a week since the attempted act of terrorism aboard that flight to Detroit on Christmas Day. On Thursday, I received the preliminary findings of the reviews that I ordered into our terrorist watchlist system and air travel screening. I've directed my counterterrorism and homeland security advisor at the White House, John Brennan, to lead these reviews going forward and to present the final results and recommendations to me in the days to come.

As I said this week, I will do everything in my power to make sure our hard-working men and women in our intelligence, law enforcement and homeland security communities have the tools and resources they need to keep America safe. This includes making sure these communities-and the people in them-are coordinating effectively and are held accountable at every level. And as President, that is what I will do.

Meanwhile, the investigation into the Christmas Day incident continues, and we're learning more about the suspect. We know that he traveled to Yemen, a country grappling with crushing poverty and deadly insurgencies. It appears that he joined an affiliate of al Qaeda, and that this group-al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula-trained him, equipped him with those explosives and directed him to attack that plane headed for America.

This is not the first time this group has targeted us. In recent years, they have bombed Yemeni government facilities and Western hotels, restaurants and embassies-including our embassy in 2008, killing one American. So, as President, I've made it a priority to strengthen our partnership with the Yemeni government-training and equipping their security forces, sharing intelligence and working with them to strike al Qaeda terrorists.

And even before Christmas Day, we had seen the results. Training camps have been struck; leaders eliminated; plots disrupted. And all those involved in the attempted act of terrorism on Christmas must know-you too will be held to account.

But these efforts are only part of a wider cause. It's been nearly a year since I stood on the steps of the U.S. Capitol and took the oath of office as your President. And with that oath came the solemn responsibility that I carry with me every moment of every day-the responsibility to protect the safety and security of the American people.

On that day I also made it very clear-our nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred, and that we will do whatever it takes to defeat them and defend our country, even as we uphold the values that have always distinguished America among nations.

And make no mistake, that's exactly what we've been doing. It's why I refocused the fight-bringing to a responsible end the war in Iraq, which had nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks, and dramatically increasing our resources in the region where al Qaeda is actually based, in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It's why I've set a clear and achievable mission-to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies and prevent their training to either country.



**WATCH THE VIDEO**



January 01, 2010

[Weekly Address: The Fight Against Al Qaeda](#)

**BLOG POSTS ON THIS ISSUE**

February 16, 2010 2:45 PM EST

[Nuclear Energy and an Energy-Independent Future](#)

February 15, 2010 2:56 PM EST

[Patriotism and Pride at the Olympics](#)

February 15, 2010 12:30 PM EST

[Relief from Crushing Student Loan Payments](#)

[VIEW ALL RELATED BLOG POSTS](#)

<a href="#">Facebook</a>	<a href="#">YouTube</a>
<a href="#">Twitter</a>	<a href="#">Vimeo</a>
<a href="#">Flickr</a>	<a href="#">iTunes</a>
<a href="#">MySpace</a>	<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>

And it's why we've forged new partnerships, as in Yemen, and put unrelenting pressure on these extremists wherever they plot and train-from East Africa to Southeast Asia, from Europe to the Persian Gulf. And though often out of sight, our progress has been unmistakable. Along with our partners, we've disrupted terrorist financing, cut off recruiting chains, inflicted major losses on al Qaeda's leadership, thwarted plots here in the United States, and saved countless American lives.

Yet as the Christmas Day attempt illustrates, and as we were reminded this week by the sacrifices of more brave Americans in Afghanistan-including those seven dedicated men and women of the CIA-the hard work of protecting our nation is never done. So as our reviews continue, let us ask the questions that need to be asked. Let us make the changes that need to be made. Let us debate the best way to protect the country we all love. That is the right and responsibility of every American and every elected official.

But as we go forward, let us remember this-our adversaries are those who would attack our country, not our fellow Americans, not each other. Let's never forget what has always carried us through times of trial, including those attacks eight Septembers ago.

Instead of giving in to fear and cynicism, let's renew that timeless American spirit of resolve and confidence and optimism. Instead of succumbing to partisanship and division, let's summon the unity that this moment demands. Let's work together, with a seriousness of purpose, to do what must be done to keep our country safe.

As we begin this New Year, I cannot imagine a more fitting resolution to guide us-as a people and as a nation.

**Our Government**

- [The Executive Branch](#)
- [The Legislative Branch](#)
- [The Judicial Branch](#)
- [The Constitution](#)
- [Federal Agencies & Commissions](#)
- [Elections & Voting](#)
- [State & Local Government](#)
- [Resources](#)

**Home**

**The White House Blog**

**Photos & Videos**

- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Live Streams](#)
- [Podcasts](#)

**Issues**

- [Civil Rights](#)
- [Defense](#)
- [Disabilities](#)
- [Economy](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Energy & Environment](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Family](#)
- [Fiscal Responsibility](#)
- [Foreign Policy](#)
- [Health Care](#)
- [Homeland Security](#)
- [Immigration](#)
- [Poverty](#)
- [Rural](#)
- [Seniors & Social Security](#)
- [Service](#)
- [Taxes](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Urban Policy](#)
- [Veterans](#)
- [Women](#)
- [Additional Issues](#)

**Briefing Room**

- [Your Weekly Address](#)
- [Speeches & Remarks](#)
- [Press Briefings](#)
- [Statements & Releases](#)
- [Presidential Actions](#)
- [Featured Legislation](#)
- [Nominations & Appointments](#)
- [Disclosures](#)

**The Administration**

- [President Barack Obama](#)
- [Vice President Joe Biden](#)
- [First Lady Michelle Obama](#)
- [Dr. Jill Biden](#)
- [The Cabinet](#)
- [White House Staff](#)
- [Executive Office of the President](#)
- [Other Advisory Boards](#)

**About the White House**

- [History](#)
- [Presidents](#)
- [First Ladies](#)
- [The Oval Office](#)
- [The Vice President's Residence & Office](#)
- [Eisenhower Executive Office Building](#)
- [Camp David](#)
- [Air Force One](#)
- [White House Fellows](#)
- [White House Internships](#)
- [White House 101](#)
- [Tours & Events](#)

WWW.WHITEHOUSE.GOV

[En español](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Copyright Information](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact](#)  
[USA.gov](#) | [Subscribe to RSS Feeds](#) | [Apply for a Job](#)