

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

**Remarks on the Release of American Journalists by North Korea**

*August 5, 2009*

Good morning, everybody. I want to just make a brief comment about the fact that the two young journalists, Euna Lee and Laura Ling, are safely back with their families. We are, obviously, extraordinarily relieved. I had an opportunity to speak with the families yesterday once we knew that they were on the plane. The reunion that we've all seen on television, I think, is a source of happiness not only for the families but for the entire country.

I want to thank President Bill Clinton—I had a chance to talk to him—for the extraordinary humanitarian effort that resulted in the release of the two journalists. I want to thank Vice President Al Gore, who worked tirelessly in order to achieve a positive outcome.

I think that not only is this White House, obviously, extraordinarily happy, but all Americans should be grateful to both former President Clinton and Vice President Gore for their extraordinary work. And my hope is, is that the families that have been reunited can enjoy the next several days and weeks, understanding that because of the efforts of President Clinton and Gore, they are able to be with each other once again.

So we are very pleased with the outcome, and I'm hopeful that the families are going to be able to get some good time together in the next few days.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:37 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to American journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling, who had been held by North Korean authorities since March 17, 2009.

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