

STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

President of the U.S.: We bring together leaders from Canada, France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, the EU, and the World Health Organization, to discuss what appears to be both a global health and security challenge. We showed our determination to remain united in protecting our people in defeating those responsible for the this attack, and call on all other countries to work with us.

We ask our publics to remain calm and resolute. We are working quickly and effectively to help the sick and care for those afflicted, as well as avoiding the continued spread. We have initiated immunization of our people and immediate additional production of vaccine. We will use all available means in our countries and in the United Nations, NATO and the EU, and our partners in Muslim countries, to pursue the perpetrators and halt the spread of disease. And we will work closely with our Muslim allies, and governments must take strong action against violence towards Muslims. We are united, and this is a fight we will win. That is our declaration.

I wanted to just give you an outline of our discussions, because it is true, we have spent a lot of time together and there is a crisis. But I think that our discussions have really been very useful, because they point the way towards continued cooperation and some ideas that have to be followed out, if we are going to be able to deal with this crisis appropriately.

So, let me just give you a brief summary, and then I will open this up. Already, some are in the process of ring vaccination, as recommended by the WHO. We're considering how available stockpiles can be used for our common purpose in this emergency, and some countries have already offered vaccine supplies.

We're working towards establishing a joint taskforce to tackle this global issue. And the taskforce will be based in an operation center in Brussels, with European, American and Canadian, and WHO, and NATO, and EU representatives. And the working group has cooperation among our security, political, economic, health, and intelligence resources. And we encourage other countries to contribute to this effort. We understand that this is a beginning and that the taskforce must end up really turning into a global effort.

The United States, the United Kingdom and France have submitted a Security Council Resolution condemning the attack and invoking Chapter 7 and the Security Council is deliberating that resolution now. The NATO members are participating in our meeting—the NATO members in this meeting are supporting invoking Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. We are looking at that. The NATO Council is meeting also. We will work to strengthen the regime, preventing chemical and biological weapons. So we are looking at various paths.

I think we have found this to be a very productive few hours, because it has shown our unity. We will all be—I will, after our press conference, be going to the Oval Office to address the people of America, and I think that my colleagues, as they return, will be doing the same thing.

We are now open to your questions, and I hope that you will address them to my colleagues, because this is a truly united effort. We have shown our determination to work together in dealing with this huge crisis to us.

Thank you.

Statement to the Press, delivered by scenario participants 2:45 p.m.