

The spearhead  
economic reforms in  
the country.



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The current U. S. President, Barack Obama, gave a 61-minute State of the Union Address on January 25, 2011 to Congress that focused on the main challenges that are facing the country in this decade. Among the notable issues that the President addressed in the speech were the country's economic policy, development and employment issues. In the annual speech, the President focused mainly on domestic issues, especially issues of the economy.

He said that America has to be more competitive in the global economy and he suggested a number of reforms within the government that ought to be implemented. Mr. Obama called for more investment in education, infrastructure and scientific innovation that would ensure that the country out-innovates, out-educates, and out-build's the rest of the world. In the speech, the President suggested revenue and savings plans that should be adopted. These are a partial government spending freeze that is projected to save up to \$400 billion over the next ten years, removal of billions in tax breaks for oil companies, decrease in health care costs, including Medicare and Medicaid, reform for Social Security, merging, consolidating, and reorganizing the activities of the federal government, and lowering of corporate tax rate. In order to reduce further the expenses of the Americans, the president promised to provide eighty percent of Americans with high-speed rail access within the next twenty-five years, ensure that one million electric vehicles are available in five years, increase the source of the country's energy to clean-energy sources by 2035, and encourage investments in biomedical research and information technology.

In illustrating the country's economic recovery, Mr. Obama employed his most optimistic language. " Now we are poised for progress," said Obama. " Two years after the worst recession most of us have ever known, the stock market has come roaring back. Corporate profits are up. The economy is growing again" (Obama, para. 10). However, despite the economic growth, the president acknowledged that many American citizens still lack jobs and that more attention need to be focused on creating job opportunities for the citizens of the country.

Mr. Obama reminded his listeners that years ago, finding a good job was not as difficult as it is now since competition for the opportunities was low. However, nowadays, getting the same opportunities is more difficult because of technological improvements that have changed the way people live, work, and do business. Nonetheless, the president said that these should not impair the ability of Americans to get jobs since " no country has more successful companies, or grants more patents to inventors and entrepreneurs and America is the home of the world's best colleges and universities" (Obama, para. 17). This year's State of the Union Address laid out the policy agenda of the Obama administration to bring reforms in the country for the next year. Focusing mainly on domestic economic issues, the speech was an attempt to shape the national political narrative to the advantage of the president in tackling the problems facing the country, considering his cratering poll numbers. Mr.

Obama admitted that the previous year was a failure since less effort was focused on creating jobs and building the economy. However, through the

speech, the president aims to hit the reset button and spearhead economic reforms in the country.

## **Works Cited**

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