

Obama Does Not Mention 'Islam' in State of the Union Speech

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By [Penny Starr](#)



President Barack Obama is applauded by Vice President Joe Biden and House Speaker John Boehner on Capitol Hill while delivering his State of the Union address on Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais, Pool)

(CNSNews.com) – President Barack Obama in his State of the Union [speech](#) on Tuesday did not use the word 'Islam,' and the only reference to terrorism was as it relates to nuclear weapons, which he called “the worst weapons of war.”

Obama did use “Muslim(s)” twice, once to describe Americans and another to describe U.S. troops.

Obama spoke of the threats of al Qaeda and their “affiliates” and “extremists” who “try to inspire acts of violence within our borders.”

American Muslims, Obama said, “are part of our American family.”

“And as extremists try to inspire acts of violence within our borders, we are responding with the strength of our communities, with respect for the rule of law, and with the conviction that American Muslims are a part of our American family,” Obama said.

When talking about the U.S. military, Obama spoke about its diversity, including mentioning the Christian, Hindu and Jewish faiths and troops who are ‘Muslim,’ or followers of Islam.

“Our troops come from every corner of this country -- they’re black, white, Latino, Asian, Native American,” Obama said. “They are Christian and Hindu, Jewish and Muslim.”

Obama referred to “terrorists” and “counterterrorism” once each, and both were in reference to nuclear weapons.

“American leadership can also be seen in the effort to secure the worst weapons of war,” Obama said, crediting congressional passage of the START treaty for a reduction in nuclear weapons around the world.

Obama cited sanctions against Iran and working with South Korea as part of the effort to limit the development of nuclear weapons.

“This is just a part of how we’re shaping a world that favors peace and prosperity,” Obama said. “With our European allies, we revitalized NATO and increased our cooperation on everything from counterterrorism to missile defense.”

Jena Baker McNeill, *policy analyst on Homeland Security at the conservative Heritage Foundation*, told CNSNews.com that Obama’s speech continues his administration’s approach to terrorism as a law enforcement matter rather than a war against enemies.

McNeill said, however, that Obama is actually carrying on the Bush legacy in its battle against Islamic extremists.

“His rhetoric has often been overtly political when it comes to counterterrorism—this speech wasn’t much different. Last night demonstrated that the Obama administration—while quick to criticize the Bush administration’s approach to counterterrorism—has realized that these policies actually worked, and Obama continues to use them to justify the administration’s own security decisions,” McNeill said.

“Now we need a non-political national security strategy that doesn’t treat terrorism as a law enforcement problem, but an actual war to be won,” he added.

But Ben Friedman, research fellow on defense and homeland security studies at the Libertarian Cato Institute, disagrees.

“I am glad the president does not share his predecessor's tendency to treat terrorism as the ‘be all end all’ of U.S. foreign policy,” Friedman told CNSNews.com. “So I don't think he mentioned terrorism too little in his speech.”

Friedman said he believes intelligence rather than the military should be “our primary counterterrorism tool.”

Obama saved his remark that the “state of our union is strong” until the end of his hour-long speech, but he repeated another phrase twice right before his positive assessment of the country's health and well-being.

“We do big things,” Obama said.