

OBAMA: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Tonight, more than 200 years after a former colony won the right to determine its own destiny, the task of perfecting our union moves forward.

It moves forward because of you. It moves forward because you reaffirmed the spirit that has triumphed over war and depression, the spirit that has lifted this country from the depths of despair to the great heights of hope, the belief that while each of us will pursue our own individual dreams, we are an American family and we rise or fall together as one nation and as one people.

Tonight, in this election, you, the American people, reminded us that while our road has been hard, while our journey has been long, we have picked ourselves up, we have fought our way back, and we know in our hearts that for the United States of America the best is yet to come.

I want to thank every American who participated in this election...

... whether you voted for the very first time or waited in line for a very long time.

By the way, we have to fix that.

Whether you pounded the pavement or picked up the phone...

... whether you held an Obama sign or a Romney sign, you made your voice heard and you made a difference.

I just spoke with Governor Romney and I congratulated him and Paul Ryan on a hard-fought campaign.

We may have battled fiercely, but it's only because we love this country deeply and we care so strongly about its future. From George to Lenore to their son Mitt, the Romney family has chosen to give back to America through public service and that is the legacy that we honor and applaud tonight.

In the weeks ahead, I also look forward to sitting down with Governor Romney to talk about where we can work together to move this country forward.

I want to thank my friend and partner of the last four years, America's happy warrior, the best vice president anybody could ever hope for, Joe Biden.

And I wouldn't be the man I am today without the woman who agreed to marry me 20 years ago.

Let me say this publicly: Michelle, I have never loved you more. I have never been prouder to watch the rest of America fall in love with you, too, as our nation's first lady.

Sasha and Malia, before our very eyes you're growing up to become two strong, smart beautiful young women, just like your mom.