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Pan Am Memorial

Kent Syverud
Syracuse University

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Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud
Delivered on December 21, 2018
Location: Arlington National Cemetery
Remarks: Pan Am Memorial

*The Chancellor was introduced by Victims of Pan Am Flight 103 President,
Kara Weipz*

Exactly thirty years ago, the shortest day of the year gave way to the darkest and longest night.

Syracuse University lost 35 students on December 21, 1988. We also lost hundreds more, on Pam Am 103 and on the ground in Lockerbie, hundreds more who on that night were strangers to us, but who since then have become dear to our University and whose memory is a responsibility we gratefully embrace.

In Syracuse, that long night in 1988 was one of confusion and fear, of shock, and of many tears. But confusion, fear, and tears are not the legacy thirty years later.

On behalf of our University, I thank all those living and dead, present in person and present in spirit. I thank all those who have contributed to a legacy of Pan Am 103 that is based on hope and decency and grace.

I thank those who fought, and continue to fight, for justice and accountability for the terrorists responsible for this crime.

I thank those who worked for legislation to make our transportation system safer.

I thank the families and friends and a generation of Syracuse students and Lockerbie townspeople who have insisted that we remember these lives and pay forward their values. I thank all of you here today who bear witness in remembrance; Secretary Chao; Solicitor General Di Rollo; Chief Constable Gwynne; Director Turman; Administrator Pekoske; Rabbi Bernstein; Chaplain Austin; our color guard; the families; the Remembrance scholars.

Universities have long memories. The best of Universities long outlast any human life, however short or long. Syracuse University is about to mark its 150th birthday. For us, thirty years is a short slice of our history. I therefore can say today, and I promise, that the memory of those souls this cairn preserves will also be preserved and paid forward at our University for as long as the University endures. And the University will endure longer, I believe, than any of our lives or the lives of our children's children.

The memory at our University will be preserved in fresh Remembrance and Lockerbie scholars each year. The memory will be preserved in an archives that so many of you have helped nurture. The memory will be preserved in ever stronger helpful ties between our University and Lockerbie and Scotland. The memory will be preserved while our University endures.

Today once again, the shortest day now gives way to the longest night. There are still tears. But we are not afraid. The light of 270 good people shines out here and now, and in simultaneous ceremonies in Syracuse and Britain. It will shine through this night and the decades ahead. I thank you all for letting our University be part of this legacy of civility and grace.

To those we lost, we say, "We will now and always put a stone on your cairn."

Thank you.

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