If this month’s tragic attack in Brussels reminded us of anything, it was the importance of our continual counterterrorism efforts in the wake of these terrible events. France’s Minister of the Interior Bernard Cazeneuve and his team have worked tirelessly with their foreign counterparts to diminish these threats, and he came to Washington, D.C., to discuss these efforts this month. At a time when both of our countries face similar enemies, strong bilateral cooperation is more vital than ever. Minister Cazeneuve assured the American public that France would remain vigilant in its measures to protect citizens worldwide.

France and the U.S. continued their bilateral dialogue at this month’s Kalorama Conversations, which focused on current challenges facing both countries’ prison systems. At the French Residence, American writer Ta-Nehisi Coates joined French anthropologist and writer Didier Fassin to discuss these challenges, and the role they play in criminal justice reform.

We also took time in March to celebrate French heritage, particularly la cuisine! The sharing of food is an indelible part of our culture, and it gives the French great pleasure to carry on this tradition throughout the world, particularly during hard times. This month, chefs had the opportunity to do just that, as more than 1,000 restaurants worldwide participated in Good France, an international celebration of French fare. From South Korea to Brazil to the United States, top professional cooks put a modern touch on the classic French meal, which represents the timeless values of pleasure and quality.

As so many tourists travel to France each year with the goal of sampling the culinary specialties for which it is famous, our cuisine is both an integral part of our country’s identity and vital to our economy. We were happy to host a dinner at the French Residence in Washington on March 21 to celebrate great food on this occasion.

The fact that our countries’ ties are as secure during tough times as they are in times of celebration makes our cooperation unique, and strong as ever.
ON MARCH 10 AND 11, French Minister of the Interior Bernard Cazeneuve visited Washington, D.C., to discuss counter-terrorism and security in the wake of last year’s attacks, and to meet with his American counterparts.

As part of his visit, Minister Cazeneuve attended a discussion hosted by the Center for Cyber & Homeland Security (CCHS) at George Washington University. This was the minister’s first public appearance in the United States since the November 13 attacks in Paris.

Minister Cazeneuve addressed France’s efforts to combat terrorism in the months following the tragic attacks in Paris, in January and November of 2015. The minister further acknowledged the joint efforts of all nations to work together to combat the threats posed by Daesh (ISIS), Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, focusing particularly on the cooperation between France and the United States.

With the mounting presence of terrorist collaboration online, cyber-security was also an important topic. At GWU, he spoke of efforts to thwart acts of violence not only on the ground, but also on the Internet. Calling France “a pioneer in this area,” Minister Cazeneuve said that he had met with a number of American technology companies last year to establish “a form of positive cooperation” in this area. He also stated that the French parliament had recently ratified an agreement that would allow for closer transatlantic intelligence sharing so that France and the U.S. could work more closely in identifying wanted persons.

During his trip, Minister Cazeneuve met with his U.S. counterpart, Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, as well as Lisa Monaco, President Obama’s assistant for homeland security and counterterrorism. A week after he returned from the U.S, Attorney General Loretta Lynch met with Minister Cazeneuve at the Ministry of the Interior in Paris. Throughout all of these interactions, Minister Cazeneuve reaffirmed the strength and excellence of French-American cooperation in international security.

ON MARCH 13, a ministerial meeting was held in Paris to discuss international efforts to temper ongoing conflicts in Libya, Yemen and Syria, as well as the Middle East peace process as a whole. This was the first official meeting between newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault and his American counterpart, Secretary of State John Kerry.

Secretary Kerry expressed his pleasure at the opportunity to work with Minister Ayrault “during this historical period,” and discussed progress made in Syria since a cessation of hostilities was implemented in late February. Coming up on the fifth year of the conflict, the French foreign minister stressed the importance of a political transition as “the only viable option for Syria, for the Syrian people and for peace in the Middle East.”

Regarding French-U.S. cooperation on the peace process, Minister Ayrault expressed interest in continuing discussions on a two-state solution.
Third edition of Kalorama Conversations focuses on prison systems in France and America

Writer Ta-Nehisi Coates was one of the featured speakers at the latest installment of the Kalorama Conversations at the French Residence on March 8, taking part in a high-level discussion on reforming the prison systems in America and France. Coates, a national correspondent for The Atlantic and a recipient of the National Book Award for Nonfiction, has written extensively about mass incarceration in the United States. He joined fellow speaker Didier Fassin, a renowned French anthropologist and sociologist, to speak about issues in French and American prisons, and the role they play in each country's criminal justice system.

This discussion, moderated by The Atlantic's national correspondent Jeffrey Goldberg, was attended by representatives of Congress, think tanks, NGOs, academia and the media.

Having recently moved to France after committing to learn the language several years ago, Coates has a particularly special relationship with the country. His most recent book, Between the World and Me, was translated into French and released as Une Colère Noire: Lettre à mon fils this winter. It received much praise both in France and the United States, where figures such as Toni Morrison and President Barack Obama have identified Coates as an important voice for justice in the African American community.

Before the evening's discussion, Coates spoke briefly with News From France about his recent work and his ties with France.

Why are you here tonight to speak about criminal justice reform?
I'm black, and more than 30 to 40 percent of people incarcerated in America are African American. You can't be interested in issues such as the persistence of racism without having some sort of interest in criminal justice—it's just impossible not to.

A few years ago, you made a commitment to learning French and now live in France. What has this experience been like for you?
J'adore la France! When I was very young, I took French classes, but I did badly. I regretted this for all my life. As a writer, I think that learning other languages is of the utmost importance. In my work, I am constantly using new words and phrases, and learning different ways to express myself, whether it's speaking or writing. I started studying French four years ago, but to truly learn the language, you must be immersed in it by living in a francophone country. So, I thought to myself, why not Paris?

I like Paris a lot, and now I live there with my wife and son. My son goes to a French school. I've really enjoyed the experience and of course the wine, the bread and the cheese!

A French translation of your latest book, "Between the World and Me," came out in January. Were you at all involved in that process?
I tried to give the translator as much distance as I could. I thought he deserved the opportunity to interpret the book as he thought it should be interpreted. I've obviously been involved in the events that followed, and the promotion of the book. I've been surprised at how well it's caught on in France, it's been amazing to see that.

Third edition of Kalorama Conversations focuses on prison systems in France and America

### En chiffres...

Number of baguettes produced each year in France. The baguette is a daily staple of any French diet. By French law, a traditional baguette can have only three ingredients—flour, yeast and salt—and must weigh 250 grams, just short of nine ounces.

Portion of total spending by foreign visitors on food in France. Of the millions of tourists who visit France each year, a third cite food and wine as reasons that they visit the country. The French Foreign Ministry hopes to reach 100 million visitors a year by 2020.

Number of tourists who visit France's wine regions each year. France is regularly one of the top wine-producing countries in the world, yielding billions of liters annually.
A Y E A R  A G O, the French foreign minister announced the launch of a worldwide event called Goût de / Good France. Inspired by chef Auguste Escoffier, who created the Dîners d’Épicure (Epicurian Dinners) in 1912 to promote the excellence of French cuisine abroad, the initiative invited more than 1,000 chefs from five continents to prepare an authentic French meal on the same night. This year’s edition continued this tradition of sharing delicious and high-quality French meals around the world.

An important part of cultural heritage

The importance of le repas in France is what inspired an international celebration in its name. Since 2010, the “French gastronomic meal” has been on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list, which safeguards cultural traditions. In France, meals are of the utmost importance in daily life—they are a time to bring together family and friends, converse, relax, and enjoy quality food. For the French, meals are defined by pleasure, taste and quality, rather than convenience or speed.

Restaurants mobilized worldwide

This year, restaurants from around the world submitted sample menus in the hopes of being chosen by a selection committee headed by chef Alain Ducasse to participate in Good France. Some 1,500 restaurants were chosen for the second edition of this international event, held on March 21. Of the restaurants selected by the committee, Europe and the Americas had the highest participation rates, with 45 percent and 23 percent, respectively. Many of the featured chefs honored French culinary traditions while highlighting specialties of their own countries. Kiyomi Mikuni of Japan, for example, served duck with a wasabi-honey sauce on the side. In South Korea, Sangwon Jeong of the restaurant Le Cochon included Shihye sorbet on his menu, featuring a classic rice beverage from his home country. In other countries such as Russia, Germany and Brazil, chefs focused on perfecting French classics such as foie gras, lamb, or bouillabaisse.

The U.S. joins in the celebration

In Washington, D.C., a dinner was held at the French Residence for the second year in a row. Attendees were treated to an evening of French food prepared by Ambassador Gérard Araud’s new chef-in-residence, Michel Bastid. Among the dishes chosen by Bastid and his team were a veal round with grilled eggplant, cherry tomato confit and spring vegetables, with a chocolate raspberry tart for dessert.

Special guest Debra Eschmeyer spoke at the event, and hoped to highlight the importance of food that is both delicious and healthy. Eschmeyer is currently the executive director of Let’s Move!, First Lady Michelle Obama’s national anti-obesity campaign. French social scientist Claude Fischler also addressed the Washington, D.C. dinner. Fischler has done extensive studies on cross-cultural attitudes towards food, and said that a deeper understanding of cultural perspectives on mealtime is needed to tackle obesity and health problems.

52 restaurants in the United States hosted Good France events this year, in cities including Chicago, New York, Boston and San Francisco. Cafe des Architectes, a participating restaurant at Chicago’s Sofitel Hotel, served a seared foie gras with apple-cardamom jam, brioche and radish as their featured dish. The Windy City was one of the most well-represented areas in the United States, with five restaurants in total selected by the Good France committee. San Francisco also had five participating restaurants.

The Consulate of France in New York hosted a dinner featuring French wines of three regions that are part of UNESCO’s World Heritage list: Saint-Emilion, Burgundy and Champagne. The
menu was designed in consultation with four accomplished chefs, including Frederic Duca of Racines NY and Jimmy Leclerc of Ladurée.

La Voile, a traditional French restaurant on Newbury Street in Boston, was another East Coast participant in this year’s event. The staff, who are mostly French, have cultivated an authentic European atmosphere in Massachusetts’s capital.

In the Washington, D.C., area, three restaurants participated: Petits Plats, with head chef Fred Darricarrere; West End Bistro, with head chef Adam Barnett; and La Ferme, with head chef Alain Roussell. The team at Petits Plats share a special connection with French expats in Washington, as they provide catering for the French Embassy’s cafeteria.

“Gastronomy serves as an extraordinary ambassador for France”

—Laurent Fabius

**A time to share food and conversation**

Not only did the second edition of Good France achieve the goals set by the French foreign minister and his team—that French cuisine, a part of the country’s identity, "must be defended, supported and promoted"—but it also gave thousands of people the opportunity to pause in the midst of their busy lives, take a deep breath, and enjoy the food on their table and those sharing it with them.
In recent years, France has emerged as a major player in the startup world, as the government has made significant efforts to support talented young entrepreneurs both domestically and internationally. One such effort is the launch of the Paris French Tech Ticket.

In March, 50 international laureates of this year’s Paris French Tech Ticket program were honored by President François Hollande at the Elysée Palace. The program, which is part of the government’s French Tech initiative, brings startups to Paris to further develop their companies in France. Selected startups receive €25,000 per founder (up to three), an accelerated program to help them obtain a residence permit, housing, assistance with administrative processes and a connection with the Paris Landing Pack, a firm that helps entrepreneurs set up meetings with local investors and collaborators.

More than 1,300 entrepreneurs from more than 100 countries applied to the first edition of the program. The United States accounted for the second-largest representation of candidates, just behind India. 50 laureates were chosen, seven of whom are American. Laureates from the U.S. include entrepreneurs working on a mobile and capable alternative to the wheelchair, a platform that connects stakeholders with development projects in Africa, and an application that assists with time management. While in Paris, representatives from Smashrun, one of the selected U.S. laureates, spoke about the reasons they were drawn to the French Tech Ticket: “It's difficult to start a business in France without a visa or connections. This program is giving us the opportunity to explore that possibility in a way we never could.”

The Paris French Tech Ticket is just one government initiative that has helped attract international talent to the country. After welcoming French Tech Ticket laureates to the Elysée, President Hollande expressed excitement at their promising future, saying their work would change the world.

French talent shines at SXSW once again

South by Southwest (SXSW) began in the 1980s as an independent music festival in Austin, Tex., but over the years it has grown to include a film festival and, most recently, a conference on emerging technologies. This new focus on innovation has prompted increased interest from French entrepreneurs, a number of whom showcased their products this year at SXSW’s French Tech Pavilion.

Participating French startups at SXSW 2016 included PRYNT, which allows users to instantly print photos from their phone’s camera and Wize & Ope, a company whose shoes are made with customizable LEDs in the sole.

Others included social network Vodkaster; streaming services Reminiz and Afrostream; WB Technologies, a smart beauty firm; search engine Qwant; and Smart & Blue’s Hydrao smart shower head.

The presence of French entrepreneurs was so prominent at SXSW that March 15 was designated “French Tech Day,” featuring panels, demos, a pitch session, and of course, food, drink and live music.

Startup companies were not the only groups that showcased their talent, however. France Rocks, hosted by the New York-based non-profit Bureau Export, brought more than a dozen French musicians to perform at SXSW. Artists such as Fakear, the Blind Suns, L.E.J. and Talisco shared their music with American audiences at a number of different venues around Austin.

Over the course of just a few days, rising stars in both music and technology showed what France has to offer at this dynamic festival.
**A taste of francophone countries at the annual Grande Fête**

Two days before the International Day of Francophonie on March 20, the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C., hosted La Grande Fête de la Francophonie. The annual event invites French-speaking countries and communities from around the world to share their unique traditions and celebrate their shared francophone heritage.

French is the official language not only of France, but of 12 additional countries as well; it is spoken by some 274 million people, making it the world’s fifth-most-spoken language.

The International Organization of Francophonie was created in 1970 to promote French throughout the world and foster cooperation among different French-speaking cultures and countries. Its mission is still very much alive today, as initiatives such as La Grande Fête showcase the diversity and versatility of the language.

At La Grande Fête, representatives from more than 30 embassies and cultural organizations presented their countries’ food, drinks, and traditions. From Cameroon to Switzerland to Canada, guests experienced a truly global adventure.

For the second year in a row, tickets were completely sold out. Attendees danced to live Cajun music by Major Handy and later to tracks from DJ Princess Slaya, who spun music from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and elsewhere.

**Paris boutique**

**Le Bon Marché celebrates “geriatric starlet” Iris Apfel**

94 year-old American fashion icon Iris Apfel captured the attention of French fashionistas when she attended the launch of a new exhibit at Le Bon Marché in Paris on February 27. An interior designer hailing from New York, Apfel spent the later years of her life traveling the world and amassing an immense collection of artisan accessories, clothing and fabrics. It features bold jewelry and high-style pieces from the street vendors of China to the flea markets of Africa, and has caught the eye of designers and stylists across the globe. Her collection was the subject of a very successful exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2005 as well as a hit documentary, *Iris*, which captures her bold and unique look.

Inspired by Apfel, the posh Le Bon Marché department store in Paris’s seventh arrondissement launched an exhibit and collection, “Iris in Paris.” The pieces on display present Apfel’s vision of her daring style with a Parisian flair. A photographer captured 10 images of Iris in outfits inspired by different Parisian outings, from the Tuileries garden to a flea market to the opera.

At the grand opening of the exhibition, Apfel garnered the attention of many fashion industry insiders who came to meet with her. She also attended the shows of top designers during Paris Fashion Week. A fashion trailblazer, Apfel encouraged women to cultivate their own individual way of dressing, and to dare to be bold. The display at Le Bon Marché will be open through April 16, giving tourists and fans a chance to discover Apfel’s adventurous aesthetic. The store is also selling a number of pieces inspired by her clothing.

Iris Apfel, the inspiration for Le Bon Marché’s latest display and collection, at a cocktail event held for its opening in Paris.
Reims

FOR THE FRENCH, champagne is only champagne if it comes from the beverage’s namesake region. Reims, the largest city in the Champagne region, is perhaps most famous for this bubbly drink, but it has much more to offer, including a long and interesting history.

Originally founded by the Gauls, Reims gained prominence during the Roman Empire, and many of the chalk quarries constructed by the Romans during that time have been repurposed as champagne cellars. During both World Wars, Reims suffered much destruction—to this day, bullet holes remain in the facade of the city’s central train station.

Today, Reims is a bustling city with much to offer. Its center of entertainment is Place Drouet d’Erlon, where visitors and locals can shop, have coffee at one of the many cafés, see a movie, or go out at night. For those looking for a culinary experience, the Domaine Les Crayères, a Michelin-starred restaurant, features beautiful grounds and a small luxury hotel. Soccer matches take place regularly at the Stade de Reims.

Just 45 minutes from Paris, Reims is a wonderful day-trip for those who want to escape the bustle of the capital, and an equally enjoyable destination for a week-long stay.