

World weighs in on President Obama's victory

BY BRYAN DOOLEY
SENIOR WRITER

President Barack Obama's Nov. 6 re-election was a monumental world event, accompanied by a wide range of positive and negative global reactions.

"I don't think there is one 'world' opinion of Obama," said Ken Gilmore, associate professor of political science. "He tends to be well-liked in Europe and parts of Asia and the Middle East, in comparison to previous presidents. He's very popular across Africa."

According to the Guardian, in France, 78 percent of people wanted Obama to win, and the president's second term was applauded across the political spectrum.

François Hollande, the Socialist president, sent his "warmest congratulations" saying this was, "an important moment for the U.S., but also for the world."

In Africa, the re-election was also well received.

The New York Times reports that Kenya has supported Obama since his first election. Reportedly, one of the strongest reasons for the country's support is the order President Obama gave to kill Osama Bin Laden.

"The man has shown a quiet competence that is in stark contrast

to what came before," said media commentator Tom Osanjo. "Bin Laden, for example, was responsible for the deaths of many Kenyans, and few here are sad to see him go."

According to the Associated Press, Kenya takes great pride in its association with Obama and Prime Minister Raila Odinga stated that the election victory was, "a great day for the U.S. and Kenya."

Support was also strong in Europe. In Britain, the reaction was optimistic.

British Prime Minister David Cameron told the Associated Press, "I think he's a very successful president and I look forward to working with him in the future."

The Chinese government acknowledged Obama's re-election with an affirmative reaction.

News agency Xinhua reported that Chinese President Hu Jintao congratulated Obama on his victory. Jintao said in a message that Chinese and U.S. relations have made positive progress in the past four years as a result of joint

efforts.

However, the reactions of some countries were not as positive.

"Obama four years ago came onto the scene with slogans of change and spoke of offering his hand in cooperation to Iran," Sadeq Larijani, the powerful chief of Iran's judiciary, told Iran Pulse.

"But (he) acted in a different way and unprecedented sanctions against Iran have materialized, and it is natural that the Iranian people will never forget the crimes of America," concluded Larijani.

The Russian reaction was unenthusiastic as well.

Chairman of the Russian Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee Alexei Pushkov stated, "If both parties try to overcome the accumulated distrust, if America comes to realize that it needs to work with Putin instead of thinking that it doesn't like the Russia that we live in, then we could achieve results."

Despite the wide range of global reactions, Obama's re-election does not truly impact other countries' policies.

"As to what the rest of the world thinks about Obama's win is anyone's guess," said Robert Duncan, visiting assistant professor of political science. "The world is in such a state today, both economically and politically, that I am not sure anyone outside the U.S. really has time to care that much."

Kyle Dell, associate professor of political science, adds to this sentiment.

"Most people in the world have little or no interest in the election," said Dell. "Let alone have a meaningful opinion on the results. Even if we were to aggregate together those that do, the reasons for their opinions would be so diverse that I'm not sure we would be able to say much about the common ground that the pro-Romney people would have versus the pro-Obama people."

Dell continued, "I do think a U.S. presidential election is a visible event on the global political stage, but I have my doubts about how many people are 'in the theater' and what we can really say about those that are."

Guilford gauges election outcomes, reflects on campaign

BY MCCAFFREY BLAUNER
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The mood on campus was tense Tuesday night as the election results rolled in. All eyes watched The Grill's TV screens; each fluctuation in percentages and electoral points was greeted by the sharp intake of breath and low-key fist-pumping.

The New York Post said that former Governor Mitt Romney was poised to win. The Huffington Post gave President Barack Obama 91 percent chance of victory. The truth seemed murky.

Regardless, some Obama supporters retained faith in their chosen candidate.

"I'm sure he's going to win" said Guilford College first-year Noah McDonald. "However, I worry that the electronic voting process is easier to mess with than the one that involves actual ballots."

These fears were not a hindrance in determining a clear victor, however, as later that night Obama clinched the election after stringing together wins in

Colorado and Ohio.

Guilford exploded into a level of celebration unprecedented throughout the year.

"It was like Mardi Gras" said sophomore Benjamin Rosenthal. "Guilford was significantly more poppin' that night than any weekend. I think there was some fool running around with an American flag."

"I think it was probably pretty obnoxious if you were pulling for Romney," added another student, who requested not to be named in the article. "It didn't feel like an election. It felt like we won the Superbowl. You definitely got the sense of there being two separate teams at Guilford."

Those celebrating eventually spilled down to the lake and a bonfire began. Even hours later, the cheers from campus could still be heard.

When asked if he was satisfied with the results of the election, one student stated

that he thought "it was a situation where people were supposed to choose the lesser of two evils, which is a pretty shitty way for our system to run, you know?" He added, "even a lot of the folks voting for Obama either don't really know his politics, or they don't like him."

Sophomore Duncan Fitzgerald, a self-proclaimed Romney supporter, said, "It really was obnoxious when people were celebrating. It didn't feel serious. It didn't

feel like an election."

WQFS associate Joe Fish seemed unaffected by Guilford's overwhelming enthusiasm for another Obama presidency. "I just wish that gays, all those people, could have waited another four years; we are going to go broke from government spending."

Regardless of remaining personal objections, on Jan. 20, 2013, President Obama will be inaugurated into the office of president for a second time. His successes and his failures over the next four years remain to be seen.

GRAPHIC BY JOY DAMON

Have a reaction to the election? Share it on The Guilfordian's official Facebook page.