Beat: Business

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to resign

-, 26.09.2014, 02:58 Time

USPA News - U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, who is the first African American to hold the position, announced Thursday that he will resign once a successor has been named and approved, telling President Barack Obama that six years as the country`s top law enforcement officer was "a pretty good run." Holder, 63, is one of the longest serving members of Obama`s cabinet and has the now fourth longest tenure in the post.

He recently played a key role in the government`s response to the shooting of an unarmed black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri, but achievements cited by Obama include work to prosecute hundreds of terrorism cases and going after financial institutions to recover $85 billion. "I come to this moment with very mixed emotions. Proud of what the men and women of the Department of Justice have accomplished over the last six years and, at the same time, very sad that I will not be a formal part of the great things that this department and this President will accomplish over the next two," Holder said at a press conference with Obama. Obama said Holder came to him over the summer and said he thought six years had been a good run. "I imagine his family agrees. ... I know Brooke and Maya and Buddy are excited to get their dad back for a while," Obama said. "But with his typical dedication, Eric has agreed to stay on as Attorney General until I nominate his successor and that successor is confirmed by the Senate." A White House official said Holder informed Obama only "very recently" and a successor was not immediately named. Reflecting on Holder`s legal career of more than 40 years, including appointments from six presidents of both parties, Obama said Holder believes in the idea of "fidelity" to the law and equal justice under the law. "That`s why I made him America`s lawyer, the people`s lawyer," he said. Obama cited numerous accomplishments by Holder during his tenure, including work with the intelligence community to prosecute successfully hundreds of terrorism cases, being behind the largest mafia take-down in American history, and going after financial institutions to recover $85 billion. But Holder`s "proudest achievement," Obama said, was his civil rights work. He said Holder was "relentless" in defending the Voting Rights Act from attack, initiated litigation against state immigration laws, prosecuted hate crimes, advanced justice for Native Americans and stopped the government`s defense of the Defense of Marriage Act, the law which denied federal benefits to married individuals in same-sex relationships until it was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2734/us-attorney-general-eric-holder-to-resign.html

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