

in Tehran to heed your will and to make itself accountable to you. The day will come when the people of Iran have a Government that embraces liberty and justice and Iran joins the community of free nations. And when that good day comes, you will have no better friend than the United States of America.

To the leaders across the Middle East who are fighting the extremists: The United States will stand with you as you confront the terrorists and radicals. We urge you to join us in committing the resources to help the Palestinians build the institutions of a free society. Help the citizens of Lebanon preserve their Government and their sovereignty in the face of outside pressure from their neighbors. Show the Iraqis that you support them in their effort to build a more hopeful nation. And as you do these things, the best way to defeat the extremists in your midst is by opening your societies and trusting in your people and giving them a voice in their nation.

And finally, to the people of the Middle East: We hear your cries for justice. We share your desire for a free and prosperous future. And as you struggle to find your voice and make your way in this world, the United States will stand with you.

For most of the world, there's no greater symbol of America than the Statue of Liberty. It was designed by a man who traveled widely in this part of the world and who had originally envisioned his woman bearing a torch as standing over the Suez Canal. Ultimately, of course, it was erected in New York Harbor, where it has been an inspiration to generations of immigrants. One of these immigrants was a poet/writer named Ameen Rihani. Gazing at her lamp held high, he wondered whether her sister might be erected in the lands of his Arab forefathers. Here is how he put it: "When will you turn your face toward the East, oh Liberty?"

My friends, a future of liberty stands before you. It is your right. It is your dream. And it is your destiny.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. at the Emirates Palace Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Aida Abdullah Al-Azdi, executive director, Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)

of the Palestinian Authority; Nobel Prize winner and economist Gary S. Becker; and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel.

### Remarks During a Tour of an Alternative Fuel Sources Exhibit in Abu Dhabi

January 14, 2008

**The President.** It's amazing, isn't it? This country has gotten its wealth from the ground and is now reinvesting in alternative forms of energy, sometimes joint venturing with U.S. institutions, like MIT.

[At this point, the exhibit tour continued, and no transcript was provided. The remarks continued as follows.]

**The President.** It's a modern society that is using its wealth not only to educate its people but to stay on the leading edge of technological change.

And Your Highness, it's been an amazing experience for me. And I don't think most Americans understand the UAE. And I don't think most Americans understand that your education systems are modern and that you're thinking about the future in constructive ways. I appreciate the chance to learn about you.

[The exhibit tour continued, and no transcript was provided. The remarks concluded as follows.]

**The President.** My hope is my visit shines a spotlight on the Middle East, the opportunities to work constructively with our friends and allies, and shows people the truth about what life is like here in the UAE. This is a remarkable place. The architecture is beautiful, but the can-do spirit is amazing.

And we just heard a briefing about how they're going to construct a city based entirely upon renewable energy. It is—it will be an opportunity to see what works, what won't work, and an opportunity to share that technology with others.

And I appreciate the commitment to conservation and to the environment that the leadership has shown here. This has been a very interesting experience. I can't thank you enough for your hospitality.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:37 a.m. at the Emirates Palace Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

**Remarks Prior to a Discussion With Young Arab Leaders in Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

*January 14, 2008*

**The President.** Thank you, sir. I'm proud to be with you. Your Highness, thank you very much. I appreciate you picking this particular location. It is a fantastic view of your—of Dubai.

First of all, just a couple of impressions—I'm most impressed with what I've seen here. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong and, equally importantly, the desire to make sure that all aspects of society are—have hope and encouragement. And I appreciate your leadership, Your Highness.

And I want to thank you, sir, for having me. I'm looking forward to talking to the young leaders from around the region. I will answer your questions. And I also want you to understand something about America: that we respect you; we respect your religion; and we want to work together for the sake of freedom and peace.

And I thank—I'm particularly pleased to know that you have set up interchanges with some of the young in my country. You'll find them to be compassionate, decent people who share the same goals and dreams. And so I want to thank you for coming.

Your Highness, I'm so honored by your hospitality.

**Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid al-Maktum.** Thank you, sir. It is our pleasure to have you.

**The President.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. at the Burj Al Arab Hotel.

**Proclamation 8215—Religious Freedom Day, 2008**

*January 14, 2008*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Thomas Jefferson counted the freedom of worship as one of America's greatest blessings. He said it was "a liberty deemed in other countries incompatible with good government, and yet proved by our experience to be its best support." On Religious Freedom Day, we celebrate the 1786 passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

The freedom to worship according to one's conscience is one of our Nation's most cherished values. It is the first protection offered in the Bill of Rights: that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." In America, people of different faiths can live together united in peace, tolerance, and humility. We are committed to the proposition that as equal citizens of the United States of America, all are free to worship as they choose.

In an era during which an unprecedented number of nations have embraced individual freedom, we have also witnessed the stubborn endurance of religious repression. Religious freedom belongs not to any one nation, but to the world, and my Administration continues to support freedom of worship at home and abroad. On Religious Freedom Day and throughout the year, we recognize the importance of religious freedom and the vital role it plays in spreading liberty and ensuring human dignity.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2008, as Religious Freedom Day. I call on all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty, endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in