

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, September 26, 2008

**The President's News Conference  
With President Alvaro Uribe Velez of  
Colombia**

*September 20, 2008*

**President Bush.** Good morning, Mr. President. Welcome back to the White House. I appreciate your friendship, and I admire your bold leadership. You have transformed your nation, and you have made Colombia a powerful example of how democracy can work in our neighborhood. And I congratulate you.

Colombia is one of our closest allies, and we have worked together on many important issues, and we will continue to do so. We worked to improve security and advance freedom. The United States supports Colombia's efforts to modernize its security forces, to fight terrorists and drug kingpins, and to provide Colombians with alternatives to lives of terror and narcotrafficking.

And your efforts are working. I think it's very important for the people of the United States to hear these statistics: Since you took office, Mr. President, homicides have dropped by 40 percent, kidnappings have dropped by more than 80 percent, terrorist attacks have dropped by more than 70 percent. That is a very strong record. Because of your decisive actions the Marxist terrorist network known as FARC has been put on the run. And our country admired greatly the rescue efforts, made by your team, of 15 hostages, including 3 Americans. And thank you for meeting with them.

In the last few years, thousands of members of FARC have deserted. They've realized the empty promise of the leaders of—you know, won't be met. And you have offered these folks a better life and a better alternative.

It's also—it's in our interest to continue to support Colombia. What happens in Colombia can affect life here in the United States. You've got a strong supporter here.

And after I leave office, it's going to be very important for the next President and the next Congress to stand squarely by your side.

We're working together to open up markets and increase prosperity. And next week, the President and I will be meeting with leaders throughout our hemisphere in New York to discuss the importance of free and fair trade. We're going to send a clear message, that increasing trade is essential to the economic well-being of every nation in our region; that our neighborhood will prosper if we trade freely. You're our fourth largest trading partner. Trade between our two nations reached \$18 billion last year, and that's beneficial for the people of Colombia, and it's beneficial for the people of the United States.

And I believe it's in our interest to continue to open new opportunities for both countries. Most of Colombia's products enter the United States today duty free. Most of ours face tariffs up to 35 percent or higher. In essence that's—that makes our goods and services less competitive. We negotiated an agreement in November of 2006, nearly 2 years ago, which leveled the playing field; our negotiators worked hard to treat each other fairly. It's in our economic interest that we have free trade and fair trade. It's in our economic interest that we continue to open up markets in our neighborhood, particularly with a nation that is growing like yours.

And yet, we can't get a vote out of Congress. I've been asking the Democrat leadership in Congress for a vote, and they've consistently blocked the vote. And Members of Congress from both parties have got to understand the following facts: First of all, about half our growth last year, Mr. President, was because of exports. In other words, exports have affected our economy in a positive way. If that's the case, it seems like we ought to be encouraging exports, not discouraging them.

Secondly, a lot of small businesses trade—send goods and services to Colombia. It's important for the small-business sector to be vital and strong. Thirdly, a lot of jobs depend upon exports. And if we can create exports, it makes it more likely somebody is going to have good work.

And so this bill is in everybody's interest, and I urge the Congress to carefully consider not only the economic interest at stake, but the national security interest at stake of not approving this piece of legislation.

Mr. President, you have—you've been a good friend, and it has been a real pleasure to have worked with you during these years. You have done what you said you were going to do. You've been an honest man, forthright and open. And you deserve the support of the United States of America. You've had it during my administration; you will have it to the end of my administration. And I ask that the Congress carefully consider the importance of this relationship as they think about different pieces of legislation to pass before the term ends.

*Bienvenidos.*

**President Uribe.** *Muchas gracias. Inmensamente agradecido.*

**President Bush.** *Si.*

**President Uribe.** Mr. President, I have no words to express my gratitude to you, to your team, for your permanent interest in our country, for your friendship for my country.

We have made significant progress. And one very essential portion of this progress has been your help, the help of the United States. We are working to have Colombia with more confidence—confidence to invest in Colombia, to live in Colombia, to study in Colombia, to find jobs in Colombia. And we support confidence upon three pillars: security with democracy; it means security with democratic values, with pluralism, with freedoms, with dissent. The second pillar is investment; investment with social responsibility, security, and investment, create a framework for prosperity. And in a part of prosperity, it is possible to create social cohesion, and social cohesion is the validator for security and for investment.

Therefore, you see that our policy is based upon the universal democratic values we share with the United States. Your support

has been very important for Colombia to face the threat of terrorism and for Colombia to maintain and to grow deeper and deeper with a respect to universal democratic values.

The free trade agreement is one of the main aspects of our bilateral relationships. You have understood the importance of this agreement for both countries. It could be that our economy is a very small economy to be considering trade agreements. But for us, it is very important. And it is very important not only from the political standpoint but also from the economic standpoint.

Free trade agreement for us is the possibility to give certainty to investors for them to come to Colombia, and the more the investors come to Colombia, the less difficult for us to defeat terrorism. Investment is the real alternative to illicit crops. Investment is the real possibility for our people to find high-quality jobs.

Thank you, Mr. President. And please, I want to express, on behalf of all Colombians, our gratitude to you, to your team, and through you, to your people, all the citizens in the United States.

Yesterday we were very happy when we saw again the three Americans who were in captivity for many years and were rescued, thanks to the heroism of our soldiers. We are—we were very sad when we came to United States in other opportunities, and we had no good news about the hostages. Now we are very happy because of this good news, the rescue of the hostages. Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** Yes, sir. Thank you. *Dos preguntas por cada lado.*

Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press]. That's two questions per each side. [Laughter] Just strutting out my Spanish here.

### **National Economy**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** *Tengo que practicar.*

**Q.** Democrats are insisting that the Federal bailout package include help for homeowners facing foreclosure, other assistance for middle class citizens such as possibly expanding the jobless benefits. Is that completely out of the question?

**President Bush.** We're going to work with Congress to get a bill done quickly. I called

leaders of both chambers, both parties, yesterday to thank them for the initial statements coming out of the meeting that they had with Secretary Paulson and Chairman Bernanke. I found a common understanding of how severe the problem is and how it is necessary to get something done quickly, and I think we will.

And we'll continue to work with them. It is essential that the package be robust and strong to address the problem. I know—look, I'm sure there are some of my friends out there saying, "I thought this guy was a market guy; what happened to him?"

Well, my first instinct wasn't to lay out a huge government plan. My first instinct was to let the market work until I realized that—upon being briefed by the experts, of how significant this problem became.

And so I decided to act and act boldly. It turns out that there's a lot of interlinks throughout the financial system. The system had grown to a point where a lot of people were dependent upon each other, and that the collapse of one part of the system wouldn't just affect a part of the financial markets; it would affect the average citizen—and how? Well, it'd affect their capacity to borrow money to buy a house or to finance a college loan. It'd affect the ability of a small business to get credit. In other words, the systemic risk was significant, and it required a significant response, and Congress understands that. And we'll work to get something done as quickly and as big as possible.

There's going to be billions—hundreds of billion dollars at risk. This is a big package, because it was a big problem. And, you know, I tell our—I will tell our citizens and continue to remind them that the risk of doing nothing far outweighs the risk of the package, and that, over time, we're going to get a lot of the money back. But right now, the Government needed to send a clear signal that we understood the instability could ripple throughout and affect the working people and the average family, and we weren't going to let that happen.

You want to call on somebody?

**President Uribe.** I never choose the—

**President Bush.** You never choose the questioner? I will.

**President Uribe.** But here, today, I have to do this.

**President Bush.** Well, I'll be glad to do it.

**President Uribe.** We have two Juan Carlos here. *A ver, un Juan Carlos de RCN y otro Juan Carlos de Caracol.*

**President Bush.** I only saw one Carlos.

[*At this point, President Uribe spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

### **Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)/Colombia Free Trade Agreement**

[*The reporter asked a question in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

**President Uribe.** Entendio?

**President Bush.** No, but I'll play like I understood it. [*Laughter*] What was the question? I got to ask my translator. [*Laughter*]

**President Uribe.** What can do the United States to help us in rescue the hostages who keep in captivity—

**President Bush.** What did we do to help?

**President Uribe.** Yes, actually you are doing very much to help us in—against illicit drugs. And the first question he made was about how we can unblock the free—the approval of the free trade agreement.

**President Bush.** Yes. Thank you. First of all, it is—a government has to be effective and efficient in order for any help to work. In other words, we could—our intentions could be great to help deal with FARC or extremists. But unless there's a well-organized government headed by determined leadership, that help doesn't work.

And so the progress that's been made is a tribute to the Colombian Government and President Uribe. The United States is a partner. But the truth of the matter is, the credit goes to the Uribe Government.

And we will continue to stand with a government that's willing to do hard things. And there's nothing harder than to deal with FARC. But it's undeniable that progress is being made and that the FARC is weaker; FARC is on the run. People are leaving FARC because of the generous hand that the Government has reached out with.

I understand how important the free trade agreement is to Colombia. It's not only economically important, because, as the President said, if the—there's doubt about the free trade agreement, investment will become nervous. And without investment, it's very hard for the Colombian economy to continue to sustain growth, and without economic growth, it's hard to be in a hopeful society.

Secondly, the free trade agreement is more than just an economic agreement, it is a statement of friendship; it's a statement of common values. And if this agreement were not to pass it would embolden the voices of populism in the neighborhood, to the detriment of a Government which has been very strong in dealing with human rights and human dignity and the market.

And so I appreciate the President being here if this statement will help clarify the issue once again. We're going to go to New York and talk to—and remind people here in the Nation's Capital that this is an issue that affects a lot more than countries than just Colombia. And my hope is that when people fully analyze the—what's good about it from our perspective and what's good about it from Colombia's perspective and the strategic implications inherent in this bill, that they will get a vote up and it will pass. And we'll work to see that it passes.

Michael [Mike Emanuel, FOX News].  
*Miguel.*

### **National Economy**

**Q.** Mr. President, thank you very much. We're hearing, regarding the financial market bailout, a price tag of \$700 billion. I'm wondering what you could say to conservatives who are anxious about the price tag, and if you've been given assurances in your conversations with leaders on the Hill, that this legislation won't be weighed down with other items.

**President Bush.** I think most leaders would understand we need to get this done quickly and, you know, the cleaner the better. Yes, this is a big price tag because it's a big problem, Mike. I told our people I don't want to be timid in the face of a significant problem that will affect the average citizen. You know, some said, "This is—we can con-

tain this to just the financial community." In my judgment, based upon the advice of a lot of people who know how markets work, this wasn't going to be contained to just the financial community. This problem could—would spread to the average citizen.

You know, you hear them talking about Wall Street and Main Street. Well, this is Wall Street plus Main Street, and I'm worried about Main Street. I'm worried about people being able to send their kids to college or to be able to afford their homes. And therefore, I asked Hank Paulson—who, by the way, in my judgment, is doing a fabulous job; he's got a lot of credibility and he's working, and his team are working hard, as are the people at the Fed and the SEC. I said, what's it going to take to make sure Main Street doesn't get affected by the policies of Wall Street? And this is what they came up with, and this is big ticket, because it's a big problem.

I talked about confidence yesterday, that people are beginning to doubt our system. People were losing confidence. And I understand it's important to have confidence in a financial system. And so the move, as well, is to say, we understand the significance and the depth of the problem. And I believe, when it's all said and done, however, that the taxpayer is going to get a lot of that money back.

Yes, I hear people, you know, suggesting we should—maybe taken a different tack. That's the way the system works. And I understand that, but creative destruction, in my judgment, wouldn't work. This requires a—you know, it required addressing certain problems.

At first I thought we could deal with this—deal with the problem one issue at a time. We made the decision on Fannie and Freddie because there was systemic risk to our mortgage markets. And then, obviously, AIG came along—and Lehman came along and it was—it declared bankruptcy; then AIG came along and it—the house of cards was much bigger, beyond—started to stretch beyond just Wall Street, in the sense of the effects of failure. And so when one card started to go, we were worried about the whole deck going down, and so therefore moved, and moved hard.

And I believe this is going to work. We had the considered judgment of a lot of capable people. It's not only just here in Washington, but our people were listening to a lot of other voices. And we took our time to come up with a strategy and a plan that would address the problem. And you bet it's big, because it needed to be big.

And, Mike, sometimes in my line of work you get criticized. But the American people have got to know that I made this decision, along with a lot of experts, because it was necessary to protect them. In the long run, we're going to be fine. You know, we're an innovative economy: We got smart, capable people; our workers are great; small-business sector is thriving and vibrant; we're productive people. And we'll get through this.

And, you know, I know a lot of people here in Washington, Mr. President, saying, "Well, who to blame?" Now is not the time to play the blame game. There's plenty of time to analyze the situation. But from our perspective, it's time to solve the problem, and that's what we did.

Final question.

### **2008 Presidential Election/Colombia Free Trade Agreement**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Uribe.** *El otro* Juan Carlos.

**President Bush.** I only saw one Carlos. Speak English this time, Juan, will you? [Laughter]

**Q.** This is a question for both of you, but first for President Bush. Mr. President, many analysts say that the best thing for the approval in Congress of the free trade agreement would be the victory in November of Senator Obama. Do you agree?

**President Bush.** First of all, I think the best thing for the country will be the victory of McCain. I'm a big believer in Senator John McCain and his capabilities to do this job. It's very important that we get the trade bill out of politics and into the realm of strategic thought. It's in our strategic interests that we get this bill done. It's good for our economies, and it's good for our national security interest.

*Y luego?*

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**President Bush.** Oh. He's not going to comment about American politics, sure.

**President Uribe.** Whatever the world, we respect the principle of self-determination. We cannot intervene in any other country. We have fought for bipartisan policy in the United States regarding Colombia. The approach of bipartisan policy has been very convenient for our two countries. Therefore, this is what we work for.

Let me add an answer for investment. Many people ask me here, in the United States, Mr. President, why you are so eager to make Colombia country much more attractive for investors? For one reason: If we have investors, we have opportunities for our people to find high-quality jobs, with affiliation to the social security system. Investment is not our end, it's a necessary means to overcome poverty, to create a community with fair opportunities for all. This is the reason we fight for investment.

**President Bush.** *Si. Gracias. Adios, Juan Carlos.*

**President Uribe.** *Dos* Juan Carlos. Two Juan Carlos.

**President Bush.** *Y vamos?*

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 9:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, former hostages held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); and Republican Presidential nominee John McCain. A reporter referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*September 20, 2008*

Good morning. This is a pivotal moment for America's economy. Problems that originated in the credit markets and first showed up in the area of subprime mortgages have spread throughout our financial system. This has led to an erosion of confidence that has frozen many financial transactions, including loans to consumers and to businesses seeking to expand and create jobs.

As a result, the Government is acting to protect our Nation's economic health from

serious risk. Our free enterprise system rests on the conviction that the Federal Government should intervene in the marketplace only when necessary. Given the precarious state of our financial markets and their vital importance to the daily lives of the American people, Government intervention is not only warranted, it is essential.

In recent weeks, the Federal Government has taken a series of targeted measures designed primarily to stop the problems of individual firms from spreading more broadly, but more action is needed. We must address the root cause behind much of the instability in our markets. America's economy is facing unprecedented challenges, and we're responding with unprecedented action.

My administration is working with Congress on legislation which will approve the Federal Government's purchase of illiquid assets such as troubled mortgages from banks and other financial institutions. This decisive step will address underlying problems in our financial system, and it will allow financial institutions to resume lending and get our financial system moving again.

The Department of the Treasury is also acting to restore confidence in a key element of America's financial system by offering Government insurance for money market mutual funds. For every dollar you have invested in an insured fund, you'll be able to take a dollar out.

The Federal Reserve is also providing more liquidity to money market mutual funds, which will help ease pressure on our financial markets.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has issued new rules temporarily suspending the practice of short selling on the stocks of financial institutions. This is intended to prevent investors from intentionally driving down particular stocks for their own personal gain.

Finally, when we get past the immediate challenges, my administration looks forward to working with Congress on measures to bring greater long-term transparency and reliability to the financial system.

These measures require us to put a significant amount of taxpayer dollars on the line, but I'm convinced that this bold approach will cost American families far less than the

alternative. Further stress on our financial markets would cause massive job losses, devastate retirement accounts, further erode housing values, and dry up new loans for homes, cars, and college tuitions.

In this difficult time, I know many Americans listening may be wondering about the security of your finances. Through the FDIC, every savings account, checking account, and certificate of deposit is insured by the Federal Government for up to \$100,000. The FDIC has been in existence for 75 years, and no one has ever lost a penny on an insured deposit. And this will not change.

In the long term, Americans can have reason to be confident in our economic strength. America has the most talented, productive, and entrepreneurial workers in the world. This country is the best place in the world to invest and do business. And as we've seen repeatedly over the past 8 years, we have a flexible and resilient system that absorbs challenges, makes corrections, and bounces back.

We will weather this challenge too, and we will do it together. This is not a time for partisanship. I'll work with Democrats and Republicans alike to steer our economy through these difficult times and back to the path of long-term growth. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:25 p.m. on September 19 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Islamabad, Pakistan**

*September 20, 2008*

I strongly condemn the terrorist bombing in Islamabad that targeted and killed many innocents, including at least one American. I extend condolences to the families of all those killed in this brutal attack.

This bombing, the latest in a series of terrorist attacks, is part of a continuing assault on the people of Pakistan. This attack is a

reminder of the ongoing threat faced by Pakistan, the United States, and all those who stand against violent extremism. We will assist Pakistan in confronting this threat and bringing the perpetrators to justice. We will fully support the democratically elected Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people as they face enormous challenges economically as well as from terrorism.

### **Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia**

*September 20, 2008*

Mr. President, members of your delegation, members of my Cabinet, Members of the United States Senate and United States Congress, honored guests: Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are really pleased you all are here. Our nations share a faith in liberty, a willingness to defend it, and a confidence that freedom will define the future for our region. The American people, Mr. President, are proud to call the Colombian people our friends and our allies.

You, Mr. President, are a strong leader. You and your Government and the Colombian people have shown courage in freedom's cause, by taking on the terrorists and the drug lords. This summer, our Nation was impressed by the daring rescue of 15 hostages, 3 of whom were American citizens. We appreciate your leadership. We are pleased to be your partner in strengthening the rule of law and combating the illegal drug trade and helping victims of violence rebuild their lives and communities.

We're also partners in the spread of prosperity. We have negotiated a fair free trade agreement that will benefit families and businesses in both our nations. And I appreciate your strong advocacy for this agreement. And my sincere hope is that the United States Congress will pass the Colombia free trade agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. President, Laura and I warmly remember our visits to your beautiful country. We were honored to visit a city liberated by the great Simon Bolivar. And in that visit we were honored to be with you and your lovely wife.

And so tonight I want to propose a toast to our friendship, the friendship between our countries. May God bless Colombia, and may God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, former hostages held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); and Lina Maria Moreno de Uribe, wife of President Uribe. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Uribe. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Statement on the National Economy**

*September 22, 2008*

Over the weekend, members of my administration and congressional leaders worked on legislation to address the crisis in our Nation's financial markets. They made good headway toward a bill that can pass the House and Senate in a timely manner, and the American people appreciate their efforts.

Obviously, there will be differences over some details, and we will have to work through them. That is an understandable part of the policymaking process. But it would not be understandable if Members of Congress sought to use this emergency legislation to pass unrelated provisions, or to insist on provisions that would undermine the effectiveness of the plan. I appreciate Members of Congress in both parties resisting the urge to do so, and keeping the rescue bill focused on solving the crisis in our financial markets.

Americans are watching to see if Democrats and Republicans, the Congress and the White House, can come together to solve this problem with the urgency it warrants. Indeed, the whole world is watching to see if we can act quickly to shore up our markets and prevent damage to our capital markets, businesses, our housing sector, and retirement accounts.

Failure to act would have broad consequences far beyond Wall Street. It would threaten small-business owners and homeowners on Main Street.

Everyone recognizes that it's not easy to write a bill of this magnitude in a timely manner, and all those who have worked so hard over the weekend and continue this morning deserve the thanks and appreciation of every American. Working together, I am confident we can enact the legislation necessary to prevent lasting damage to our economy and meet the unique challenge facing us today.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

**Remarks During a Meeting With  
President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan  
in New York City**  
*September 23, 2008*

**President Bush.** Mr. President, I thank you for coming. And I have really been looking forward to this meeting; after all, Pakistan is a close and important friend.

First of all, I want to express our deepest condolences to the victims of those who died as a result of the terrorist attack in Islamabad. I know that you—your heart went out to the families of those who suffer and so does the collective heart of the American people; we stand with you.

**President Zardari.** Thank you.

**President Bush.** Secondly, I got to know you a little bit in an interesting way when I met your children at the Olympics. And it reminded me about the great suffering that they and you have been through with the loss of your beloved wife. And I thank you very much for staying involved in public service to honor her legacy.

Pakistan is an ally, and I look forward to deepening our relationship. We'll be discussing, of course, how to help spread prosperity. We want our friends around the world to be making a good living. We want there to be economic prosperity, and we can work together, and of course, we'll be talking about security. And your words have been very strong about Pakistan's sovereign right and sovereign duty to protect your country, and the United States wants to help.

One of the things I've heard here in my stay thus far in New York, is from world leaders wondering whether or not the United

States has the right plan to deal with this economic crisis. And I've assured them that the plan laid out by Secretary Paulson is a robust plan to deal with a serious problem. And now they're wondering about our Congress, and I've assured them as well that having spoken to the leaders of the Congress from both political parties, there is the desire to get something done quickly.

Now, there's a natural give-and-take when it comes to the legislative process. There are good ideas that need to be listened to in order to get a good bill out that will address the situation. But I'm confident, Mr. President, and as I've told you and other leaders, that there will be a bipartisan bill; that the Republicans and Democrats will come together to get this piece of legislation passed, which is necessary to address the financial situation and provide a rescue plan to make sure that there's some stability in the markets.

Anyway, Mr. President, thank you for coming.

**President Zardari.** Thank you. Thank you for your kind words; thank you for your thoughts. As always, you prove to the world that your heart is in there for us Pakistanis; we respect your feelings, we respect the American ideals. And we bring to this the whole concept of your promise to the world of bringing democracy to Pakistan. Democracy has come full circle, and it's been the help of all the friends around the world; and we are thankful to the world for helping democracy.

And democracy is the answer. We will solve all the problems. We have a situation; we have issues; we've got problems. But we will solve them, and we will rise to the occasion. That's what my wife's legacy is all about. That's what democracy is all about, to take difficult decisions and do the right thing for the people of our country and our two great nations. We should come together in this hard time, and we will share the burden and the responsibility with the world.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister and Opposition Leader Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, who was killed in a

suicide attack in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, on December 27, 2007. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks to the United Nations  
General Assembly in New York City  
September 23, 2008**

Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen: I'm pleased to be here to address the General Assembly.

Sixty-three years ago, representatives from around the world gathered in San Francisco to complete the founding of the Charter of the United Nations. They met in the shadow of a devastating war, with grave new dangers on the horizon. They agreed on a historic pledge: To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, and unite their strength to maintain international peace and security.

This noble pledge has endured trying hours in the United Nations history, and it still guides our work today. Yet the ideals of the charter are now facing a challenge as serious as any since the U.N.'s founding, a global movement of violent extremists. By deliberately murdering the innocent to advance their aims, these extremists defy the fundamental principles of international order. They show contempt for all who respect life and value human dignity. They reject the words of the Bible, the Koran, the Torah, or any standard of conscience or morality. They imperil the values of justice and human rights that gave birth to the United Nations, values that have fueled an unprecedented expansion of freedom across the world.

To uphold the world's—words of the charter in the face of this challenge, every nation in this chamber has responsibilities. As sovereign states, we have an obligation to govern responsibly, and solve problems before they spill across borders. We have an obligation to prevent our territory from being used as a sanctuary for terrorism and proliferation and human trafficking and organized crime. We have an obligation to respect the rights and respond to the needs of our people.

Multilateral organizations have responsibilities. For 8 years, the nations in this assembly have worked together to confront the extremist threat. We've witnessed successes and setbacks, and through it all a clear lesson

has emerged: The United Nations and other multilateral organizations are needed more urgently than ever. To be successful, we must be focused and resolute and effective. Instead of only passing resolutions decrying terrorist attacks after they occur, we must cooperate more closely to keep terrorist attacks from happening in the first place. Instead of treating all forms of government as equally tolerable, we must actively challenge the conditions of tyranny and despair that allow terror and extremism to thrive. By acting together to meet the fundamental challenge of our time, we can lead toward a world that is more secure and more prosperous and more hopeful.

In the decades ahead, the United Nations and other multilateral organizations must continually confront terror. This mission requires clarity of vision. We must see the terrorists for what they are: ruthless extremists who exploit the desperate, subvert the tenets of a great religion, and seek to impose their will on as many people as possible. Some suggest that these men would pose less of a threat if we'd only leave them alone. Yet their leaders make clear that no concession could ever satisfy their ambitions. Bringing the terrorists to justice does not create terrorism; it's the best way to protect our people.

Multilateral organizations must respond by taking an unequivocal moral stand against terrorism. No cause can justify the deliberate taking of innocent human life, and the international community is nearing universal agreement on this truth. The vast majority of nations in this assembly now agree that tactics like suicide bombing, hostage-taking, and hijacking are never legitimate. This Security Council has passed resolutions declaring terror unlawful and requiring all nations to crack down on terrorist financing. And earlier this month, the Secretary-General held a conference to highlight victims of terror, where he stated that terrorism can never be justified.

Other multilateral organizations have spoken clearly as well. The G-8 has declared that all terrorist acts are criminal and must be universally condemned. And the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference recently spoke out against a suicide bombing, which he said runs

counter to the teachings of Islam. The message behind these statements is resolutely clear: Like slavery and piracy, terrorism has no place in the modern world.

Around the globe, nations are turning these words into action. Members of the United Nations are sharing intelligence with one another, conducting joint operations, and freezing terrorist finances. While terrorists continue to carry out attacks like the terrible bombing in Islamabad last week, our joint actions have spared our citizens from many devastating blows.

The brutal nature of the extremists increasingly clear, the coalition of nations confronting terror is growing stronger. Over the past 7 years, Afghanistan and Iraq have been transformed from regimes that actively sponsored terror to democracies that fight terror. Libya has renounced its support for terror and its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Nations like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are actively pursuing the terrorists. A few nations—regimes like Syria and Iran—continue to sponsor terror. Yet their numbers are growing fewer, and they're growing more isolated from the world.

As the 21st century unfolds, some may be tempted to assume that the threat has receded. This would be comforting; it would be wrong. The terrorists believe time is on their side, so they made waiting out civilized nations part of their strategy. We must not allow them to succeed. The nations of this body must stand united in the fight against terror. We must continue working to deny the terrorists refuge anywhere in the world, including ungoverned spaces. We must remain vigilant against proliferation by fully implementing the terms of Security Council Resolution 1540, and enforcing sanctions against North Korea and Iran. We must not relent until our people are safe from this threat to civilization.

To uphold the Charter's promise of peace and security in the 21st century, we must also confront the ideology of the terrorists. At its core, the struggle against extremists is a battle of ideas. The terrorists envision a world in which religious freedom is denied, women are oppressed, and all dissent is crushed. The nations of this chamber must present a more hopeful alternative, a vision where people

can speak freely, and worship as they choose, and pursue their dreams in liberty.

Advancing the vision of freedom serves our highest ideals, as expressed in the U.N.'s Charter's commitment to the dignity and worth of the human person. Advancing this vision also serves our security interests. History shows that when citizens have a voice in choosing their own leaders, they are less likely to search for meaning in radical ideologies. And when governments respect the rights of their people, they're more likely to respect the rights of their neighbors.

For all these reasons, the nations of this body must challenge tyranny as vigorously as we challenge terror. Some question whether people in certain parts of the world actually desire freedom. This self-serving condescension has been disproved before our eyes. From the voting booths of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Liberia to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Rose Revolution in Georgia to the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, we have seen people consistently make the courageous decision to demand their liberty. For all the suggestions to the contrary, the truth is that whenever or wherever people are given the choice, they choose freedom.

Nations in this chamber have supported the efforts of dissidents and reformers and civil society advocates in newly free societies throughout the new United Nations Democracy Fund. And we appreciate those efforts. And as young democracies around the world continue to make brave stands for liberty, multilateral organizations like the United Nations must continue to stand with them.

In Afghanistan, a determined people are working to overcome decades of tyranny, and protect their newly free society. They have strong support from all 26 nations of the NATO Alliance. I appreciate the United Nations' decision this week to renew the mandate for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. The United Nations is also an active civilian presence in Afghanistan, where experts are doing important work helping to improve education, facilitate humanitarian aid, and protect human rights. We must continue to help the Afghan people defend their young democracy so the Taliban

does not return to power, and Afghanistan is never again a safe haven for terror.

In Iraq, the fight has been difficult, yet daily life has improved dramatically over the past 20 months, thanks to the courage of the Iraqi people, a determined coalition of nations, and a surge of American troops. The United Nations has provided the mandate for multinational forces in Iraq through this December. And the United Nations is carrying out an ambitious strategy to strengthen Iraq's democracy, including helping Iraqis prepare for their next round of free elections. Whatever disagreements our nations have had on Iraq, we should all welcome this progress toward stability and peace, and we should stand united in helping Iraq's democracy succeed.

We must stand united in our support of other young democracies, from the people of Lebanon struggling to maintain their hard-won independence, to the people of the Palestinian Territories, who deserve a free and peaceful state of their own. We must stand united in our support of the people of Georgia. The United Nations Charter sets forth the equal rights of nations large and small. Russia's invasion of Georgia was a violation of those words. Young democracies around the world are watching to see how we respond to this test. The United States has worked with allies in multilateral institutions like the European Union and NATO to uphold Georgia's territorial integrity and provide humanitarian relief. And our nations will continue to support Georgia's democracy.

In this chamber are representatives of Georgia and Ukraine and Lebanon and Afghanistan and Liberia and Iraq and other brave young democracies. We admire your courage; we honor your sacrifices; we thank you for your inspiring example. We will continue to stand with all who stand for freedom. This noble goal is worthy of the United Nations, and it should have the support of every member in this assembly.

Extending the reach of political freedom is essential to prevailing in the great struggle of our time, but it is not enough. Many in this chamber have answered the call to help their brothers and sisters in need by working to alleviate hopelessness. These efforts to improve the human condition honor the highest ideals of this institution. They also advance

our security interests. The extremists find their most fertile recruiting grounds in societies trapped in chaos and despair, places where people see no prospect of a better life. In the shadows of hopelessness, radicalism thrives. And eventually, that radicalism can boil over into violence and cross borders and take innocent lives across the world.

Overcoming hopelessness requires addressing its causes: poverty, disease, and ignorance. Challenging these conditions is in the interest of every nation in this chamber. And democracies are particularly well-positioned to carry out this work. Because we have experience responding to the needs of our own people, we're natural partners in helping other nations respond to the needs of theirs. Together, we must commit our resources and efforts to advancing education and health and prosperity.

Over the years, many nations have made well-intentioned efforts to promote these goals. Yet the success of these efforts must be measured by more than intentions, they must be measured by results. My Nation has placed an insistence on results at the heart of our foreign assistance programs. We launched a new initiative called the Millennium Challenge Account, which directs our help to countries that demonstrate their ability to produce results by governing justly, and fighting corruption, and pursuing market-based economic policies, as well as investing in their people. Every country and institution that provides foreign assistance, including the United Nations, will be more effective by showing faith in the people of the developing world and insisting on performance in return for aid.

Experience also shows that to be effective, we must adopt a model of partnership, not paternalism. This approach is based on our conviction that people in the developing world have the capacity to improve their own lives, and will rise to meet high expectations if we set them. America has sought to apply this model in our Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Every nation that receives American support through this initiative develops its own plan for fighting HIV/AIDS and measures the results. And so far, these results are inspiring. Five years ago, 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving treatment

for HIV/AIDS. Today, that number is nearly 1.7 million. We're taking a similar approach to fighting malaria, and so far, we've supported local efforts to protect more than 25 million Africans.

Multilateral organizations have made bold commitments of their own to fight disease. The G-8 has pledged to match America's efforts on malaria and HIV/AIDS. Through the Global Fund, many countries are working to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB. Lives in the developing world depend on these programs, and all who have made pledges to fight disease have an obligation to follow through on their commitments.

One of the most powerful engines of development and prosperity is trade and investment, which create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, and help people rise out of poverty, and reinforce fundamental values like transparency and rule of law. For all these reasons, many in these chambers have conducted free trade agreements at bilateral and regional levels. The most effective step of all would be an agreement that tears down trade barriers at the global level. The recent impasse in the Doha round is disappointing, but that does not have to be the final word. I urge every nation to seize this opportunity to lift up economies around the world and reach a successful Doha agreement as soon as possible.

Beyond Doha, our nations must renew our commitment to open economies, and stand firm against economic isolationism. These objectives are being tested by turbulence in the global financial markets. Our economies are more closely connected than ever before, and I know that many of you here are watching how the United States Government will address the problems in our financial system.

In recent weeks, we have taken bold steps to prevent a severe disruption of the American economy, which would have a devastating effect on other economies around the world. We've promoted stability in the markets by preventing the disorderly failure of major companies. The Federal Reserve has injected urgently needed liquidity into the system. And last week, I announced a decisive action by the Federal Government to address the root cause of much of the instability in our financial markets, by pur-

chasing illiquid assets that are weighing down balance sheets and restricting the flow of credit. I can assure you that my administration and our Congress are working together to quickly pass legislation approving this strategy, and I'm confident we will act in the urgent time frame required.

The objectives I've laid out for multilateral institutions—confronting terror, opposing tyranny, and promoting effective development—are difficult, but they are necessary tasks. To have maximum impact, multilateral institutions must take on challenging missions. And like all of us in this chamber, they must work toward measurable goals, be accountable for their actions, and hold true to their word.

In the 21st century, the world needs a confident and effective United Nations. This unique institution should build on its successes and improve its performance. Where there is inefficiency and corruption, it must be corrected. Where there are bloated bureaucracies, they must be streamlined. Where members fail to uphold their obligations, there must be strong action. For example, there should be an immediate review of the Human Rights Council, which has routinely protected violators of human rights. There should be a stronger effort to help the people of Burma live free of the repression they have suffered for too long. And all nations, especially members of the Security Council, must act decisively to ensure that the Government of Sudan upholds its commitment to address the violence in Darfur.

The United Nations is an organization of extraordinary potential. As the United Nations rebuilds its headquarters, it must also open the door to a new age of transparency, accountability, and seriousness of purpose.

With determination and clear purpose, the United Nations can be a powerful force for good as we head into the 21st century. It can affirm the great promise of its founding.

In the final days of the San Francisco Conference, the delegates negotiating the U.N. Charter received a visit from President Harry Truman. He acknowledged the enormous challenges they faced, and said success was only possible because of what he called an unshakable unity of determination. Today, the world is engaged in another period of

great challenge. And by continuing to work together, that unshakable unity of determination will be ours. Together, we confront and defeat the evil of terrorism. Together, we can secure the Almighty's gift of liberty and justice to millions who have not known it. And together, we can build a world that is freer, safer, and better for the generations who follow.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations; and Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### Remarks Following a Meeting on Food Security in New York City

September 23, 2008

Today Laura and I and Condi and other members of the administration are really honored to be at a table with folks from the private sector and the public sector and NGOs who are all concerned about hunger.

The United States has made a very strong and powerful commitment to help those who need food. We've committed about \$5 billion of taxpayers' money over the next 2 years to make sure people don't go hungry. And it's our interest that we do that. On the other hand, it is also in our interest to promote a second Green Revolution.

And how do you do that? Well, you use good science to get farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the tools necessary to be able to deal with the conditions in which they have to farm. You use government aid to build infrastructure so farmers can get products to market. You have good trade policy so that farm goods can travel freely across national borders. You have good agricultural policy that—combined with good trade policy, which reduces the subsidies that sometimes make it hard for, you know, indigenous farming communities to take off. You have—promote value-added processing.

And so this is the strategy that's being discussed here at this table. The United States

is a compassionate nation. When citizens around the world suffer, we suffer with them. We're a strong enough nation to help people in our own country who are having trouble, but we're also strong enough to help others as well. And a cornerstone of good foreign policy and a good compassionate philosophy is making sure that people don't go hungry.

And so I thank you all very much for sharing that passion. I thank you for the leadership roles you have taken. And may the Good Lord continue to bless your work. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at the Millennium U.N. Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

### Remarks Following a Lunch With Human Rights Activists in New York City

September 23, 2008

**The President.** Laura and I and Secretary Rice and members of my administration have just had a wonderful lunch with democracy leaders, human rights activists, courageous men and women who have stood strong for freedom. I assured them that this Government—or my Government, believes in the universality of freedom. We believe there's an Almighty, and a gift of that Almighty to every man, woman, and child is freedom.

They inspire us. Here in America, we have an obligation to help others realize the blessings of liberty. They have been on the frontlines of securing liberty. And so we want to thank you very much for your courage. We thank you for your set of beliefs that remain strong. Thank you for taking time to be with us today. And you might want to say something.

[At this point, First Lady Laura Bush made brief remarks, concluding with the introduction of human rights activist, U Kovida.]

**U Kovida.** Thank you very much for inviting me here. This is really a nice day and my friends—discussion with many people. In Burma, many hundred people, a lot. We all need human rights, all the world's people, because we are all human. So if—when people, there's no human rights, there's no people and there's no human. So I hope so—

I hope that we all—international community need help the Burmese people, and I hope to get help to others—international community and the U.S. and the European, every country. And I hope we can change the government some without weapon in Burma and Tibet and other—Zimbabwe—other countries, so around the world we all need peace for—need a change without weapon. Thank you very much.

**The President.** Thank you all. Thanks.

**The First Lady.** Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:32 p.m. at Governors Island. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda in New York City

September 23, 2008

**President Bush.** I just had a very productive meeting with President Museveni of Uganda. He is—he's been a very strong leader on a number of fronts. First, he's been very helpful in solving regional conflicts on the continent of Africa, and I want to thank you for your leadership.

Secondly, you gave me great confidence when it came to realizing the proper strategy in dealing with HIV/AIDS, because of the success in Uganda that showed the rest of the continent and the rest of the world how strong leadership and a good strategy can actually save lives in a very substantial way. The ABC program was implemented in your country; infection rate went from a lot to, you know, a much smaller number.

I also want to thank you very much for implementing the Malaria Initiative. There's been over 200,000 [2.2 million]\* bed nets distributed in your country, Mr. President, and that's because of the leadership of you and the organization of your Government. And so I thank you for coming by for what has been a very productive meeting.

\* White House correction.

**President Museveni.** Thank you, sir. Well, I thank President Bush for the support he has given Uganda through the AIDS fund, for the development contribution. That's how our people are able to get free ARVs, antiretrovirals. Many people have access to these drugs now. In fact, almost all the people that need to have them, have access to the drugs, do so now in the case of Uganda.

You should know that not everybody who has got AIDS needs to start on the ARVs; there's a certain threshold of resistance below which he should be able to access the drugs. And because of the money President Bush has provided, and also the money from the Global Fund, all our people who need to access ARVs do so now.

Then there's also the Millennium Challenge Account, although I don't fully access that money, but we have got a part of it. And that one is also very helpful.

Then there's the general support through the World Bank and other bilateral programs like USAID, supporting infrastructure. Because what we need in Africa is to lower the cost of doing business in Africa through investing in infrastructure and energy and so on, so that we can be able to attract FDI, foreign direct investment. This is really the way forward. And President Bush has been tremendous on that. He has actually been a very good friend of Africa, and we salute him our gratitude.

I thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

### Remarks During a Meeting With Members of the Iraq Coalition in New York City

September 23, 2008

**President Bush.** Mr. President, it is a pleasure to be with you, and it's a pleasure to be with nations that have helped your democracy grow. A lot of people around the world have made sacrifices along with the Iraqi people to enable a country to emerge from the shadows of tyranny, become a hopeful example for nations around the world.

I applaud your leadership, Mr. President. And I want to thank those around the table for showing courage and vision and resolve. Many of the troops of the countries represented here have returned home, but they have done so on success. And I want to applaud your steadfast leadership and thank the people of your respective countries for making the sacrifices so that others can live in a free society.

Mr. President, we've still got work to do, but there is no doubt that the situation in Iraq has changed substantially. There's no doubt that mothers are able to send their child to school without fear of carnage. Oh, there's still killers amongst you—in your midst, but your Government has been steadfast in bringing people to justice who are trying to undermine your democracy.

So I look forward to working with you. And I want to thank you for being here, and I thank you for honoring those in this room today and the peoples of their country.

Mr. President. Yes, please.

**President Jalal Talabani of Iraq.** Mr. President, I am grateful for your kind words. And I'm here, on behalf of the Iraqi people, to express my deepest appreciation for all countries who participated in the breaking Iraq from worst kind of dictatorship.

Of course, noble and responsible nations must bear their sacrifice in order to free the oppressed and bring citizens from the worst kind of dictatorship. Nevertheless, on behalf of the people of Iraq, I want to express my deepest condolences for your brave soldiers and civilians who have lost their lives while standing up for our shared values of freedom and democracy.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your brave leadership and your decision to liberate Iraq from worst kind of dictatorship. And thanks for all friends and their countries and Governments who participated from the beginning to liberate our country and rebuild a new Iraq, a democratic, federated, united, independent Iraq, which will help to promote democracy in the Middle East and help peace and security in the Middle East.

Thank you again, all of you, and you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:08 p.m. at the United Nations Headquarters. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations in New York City**

*September 23, 2008*

Mr. Secretary-General, this is my eighth chance to welcome you to New York, and I'm honored to do so. You did mention, I'm heading into retirement—[laughter]—but it has been a joy to work with you, the staff, and many of the leaders here in this hall.

It is my honor to propose a toast, Mr. Secretary-General, to you and to your hard work. May God bless all in the room, and Mr. Secretary-General, may God continue to bless you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. at the United Nations Headquarters. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-General Ban.

### **Remarks to Leaders of the Western Hemisphere in New York City**

*September 24, 2008*

Listen, thank you all very much for being here. I'm joined by leaders throughout our hemisphere to discuss trade and prosperity. I know they're going to want to hear about the rescue plan that we have submitted to the Congress. They can see our legislative process is full of give-and-take, that there's ample debate. But I am confident that when it's all said and done, there will be a robust plan, and there needs to be.

Each of the 11 countries here has a free trade agreement with the United States or one pending before Congress. Free and fair trade is in our mutual interests.

What's interesting about free and fair trade amongst the nations is that the people benefit. For example, the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement is in its early stages, but trade between participating countries with the United States is up

23 percent. That translates to jobs and prosperity. In the 5 years since the free trade agreement between the United States and Chile took effect, trade between our two nations has increased by more than 180 percent. And that's positive. In other words, these agreements are mutually beneficial. And most importantly, they help small-business owners and workers and farmers and ranchers.

In the nearly 15 years since NAFTA entered into force, trade between the United States, Canada, and Mexico has increased by a combined total of more than 200 percent.

Today our countries are launching the Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas Initiative to continue this progress. This initiative will provide a forum where leaders can work to ensure that the benefits of trade are broadly shared. It will deepen the connections among regional markets. It will expand our cooperation on development issues. This is a very promising initiative, and I expect positive results when our representatives meet on these issues later this year.

It's important for the American people to understand that exports benefit workers. Half of our growth last year was the result of trade. And therefore, it's in our interest to continue to open up markets, particularly in our own neighborhood. There are three free trade agreements pending in the Congress today: South Korea, Panama, and Colombia. Obviously, two of those are with nations in our own hemisphere. The Colombia free trade agreement will be good for Colombia; it will be good for America. The President and I have worked diligently to make sure this is a fair agreement, and Congress needs to pass it.

The Panamanian agreement—it's good for Panama, it's good for America. And Congress ought to pass that agreement too. It's important that these agreements be passed as soon as possible.

I want to thank the leaders for joining us. I'm looking forward to our discussion. I appreciate your hard work in working to make sure your people and your countries have great opportunities. One such opportunity is access to jobs provided by markets.

Thank you for your vision, and thank you for your leadership. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. at the Council of the Americas Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Remarks During a Discussion With President Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador in New York City**

*September 24, 2008*

**President Bush.** Mr. President, thank you.

I want to let my friend know, and the people of El Salvador, that the United States will extend TPS status to El Salvadorians living in our country. This is a decision that was made to improve the lives of El Salvadorians.

I'm proud to make this announcement with you standing by my side. You've been a very strong and courageous leader, and you have been a friend. And I know this is an issue of concern to you because you care deeply about the people of your country. And so when you get back home, you can tell the people that TPS has been extended.

Thank you, sir.

**President Saca.** Thank you very much. Thank you very much, President, for extending for 18 months more the TPS for the people of El Salvador. This is going to benefit our Salvadorian people with—since we have been walking in liberty, in democracy, and in integration.

Thank you very much this morning for this extension.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:53 a.m. at the Council of the Americas Headquarters. President Saca spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Statement on Provincial Elections Legislation in Iraq**

*September 24, 2008*

Today Iraq's Parliament passed a Provincial elections law enabling Iraq to hold Provincial elections by January 31, 2009. Elections in Iraq can now be held under a new system that will give Iraqis more say in choosing their elected representatives.

Nothing is more central to a functioning democracy than free and fair elections. Today's action demonstrates the ability of Iraq's leaders to work together for the good of the Iraqi people and represents further progress on political reconciliation. I congratulate the members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives for coming together to pass this significant legislation.

### **Proclamation 8293—Gold Star Mother's Day, 2008**

*September 24, 2008*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Throughout our history, the men and women of the Armed Forces have put our Nation's security before their own, doing their duty in the face of grave danger. On Gold Star Mother's Day, we pay solemn tribute to the mothers of the patriots lost serving this great Nation.

Gold Star Mothers inspire our Nation with their deep devotion to family and country. These extraordinary women serve their communities, dedicate their time to helping members of our Armed Forces and veterans, and bring comfort and hope to families whose loved ones laid down their lives in the defense of our liberty. Nothing can compensate for their sacrifice and loss, yet Gold Star Mothers demonstrate tremendous courage and resolve while working to preserve the memory and legacy of all our fallen heroes.

On this day, we honor our country's Gold Star Mothers and remember their sons' and daughters' noble service and great sacrifice. We offer them our deepest gratitude and our

most profound respect, and we ask for God's blessings to be upon them and their families.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 115 of June 23, 1936 (49 Stat. 1895 as amended), has designated the last Sunday in September as "Gold Star Mother's Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in its observance.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Sunday, September 28, 2008, as Gold Star Mother's Day. I call upon all Government officials to display the flag of the United States over Government buildings on this special day. I also encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as a public expression of our Nation's sympathy and respect for our Gold Star Mothers.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 26, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 29.

### **Address to the Nation on the National Economy**

*September 24, 2008*

Good evening. This is an extraordinary period for America's economy. Over the past few weeks, many Americans have felt anxiety about their finances and their future. I understand their worry and their frustration. We've seen triple-digit swings in the stock market. Major financial institutions have teetered on the edge of collapse, and some have failed. As uncertainty has grown, many banks have restricted lending. Credit markets have frozen, and families and businesses have found it harder to borrow money.

We're in the midst of a serious financial crisis, and the Federal Government is responding with decisive action. We boosted confidence in money market mutual funds

and acted to prevent major investors from intentionally driving down stocks for their own personal gain.

Most importantly, my administration is working with Congress to address the root cause behind much of the instability in our markets. Financial assets related to home mortgages have lost value during the housing decline, and the banks holding these assets have restricted credit. As a result, our entire economy is in danger. So I proposed that the Federal Government reduce the risk posed by these troubled assets and supply urgently needed money so banks and other financial institutions can avoid collapse and resume lending.

This rescue effort is not aimed at preserving any individual company or industry; it is aimed at preserving America's overall economy. It will help American consumers and businesses get credit to meet their daily needs and create jobs. And it will help send a signal to markets around the world that America's financial system is back on track.

I know many Americans have questions tonight: How did we reach this point in our economy? How will the solution I've proposed work? And what does this mean for your financial future? These are good questions, and they deserve clear answers.

First, how did our economy reach this point?

Well, most economists agree that the problems we are witnessing today developed over a long period of time. For more than a decade, a massive amount of money flowed into the United States from investors abroad because our country is an attractive and secure place to do business. This large influx of money to U.S. banks and financial institutions, along with low interest rates, made it easier for Americans to get credit. These developments allowed more families to borrow money for cars and homes and college tuition, some for the first time. They allowed more entrepreneurs to get loans to start new businesses and create jobs.

Unfortunately, there were also some serious negative consequences, particularly in the housing market. Easy credit combined with the faulty assumption that home values would continue to rise led to excesses and bad decisions. Many mortgage lenders ap-

proved loans for borrowers without carefully examining their ability to pay. Many borrowers took out loans larger than they could afford, assuming that they could sell or refinance their homes at a higher price later on.

Optimism about housing values also led to a boom in home construction. Eventually the number of new houses exceeded the number of people willing to buy them. And with supply exceeding demand, housing prices fell, and this created a problem. Borrowers with adjustable rate mortgages who had been planning to sell or refinance their homes at a higher price were stuck with homes worth less than expected, along with mortgage payments they could not afford. As a result, many mortgage holders began to default.

These widespread defaults had effects far beyond the housing market. See, in today's mortgage industry, home loans are often packaged together and converted into financial products called mortgage-backed securities. These securities were sold to investors around the world. Many investors assumed these securities were trustworthy and asked few questions about their actual value. Two of the leading purchasers of mortgage-backed securities were Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Because these companies were chartered by Congress, many believed they were guaranteed by the Federal Government. This allowed them to borrow enormous sums of money, fuel the market for questionable investments, and put our financial system at risk.

The decline in the housing market set off a domino effect across our economy. When home values declined, borrowers defaulted on their mortgages, and investors holding mortgage-backed securities began to incur serious losses. Before long, these securities became so unreliable that they were not being bought or sold. Investment banks such as Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers found themselves saddled with large amounts of assets they could not sell. They ran out of the money needed to meet their immediate obligations, and they faced imminent collapse. Other banks found themselves in severe financial trouble. These banks began holding on to their money and lending dried up, and the gears of the American financial system began grinding to a halt.

With the situation becoming more precarious by the day, I faced a choice: to step in with dramatic government action or to stand back and allow the irresponsible actions of some to undermine the financial security of all.

I'm a strong believer in free enterprise, so my natural instinct is to oppose government intervention. I believe companies that make bad decisions should be allowed to go out of business. Under normal circumstances, I would have followed this course. But these are not normal circumstances. The market is not functioning properly. There's been a widespread loss of confidence, and major sectors of America's financial system are at risk of shutting down.

The government's top economic experts warn that without immediate action by Congress, America could slip into a financial panic, and a distressing scenario would unfold.

More banks could fail, including some in your community. The stock market would drop even more, which would reduce the value of your retirement account. The value of your home could plummet. Foreclosures would rise dramatically. And if you own a business or a farm, you would find it harder and more expensive to get credit. More businesses would close their doors, and millions of Americans could lose their jobs. Even if you have good credit history, it would be more difficult for you to get the loans you need to buy a car or send your children to college. And ultimately, our country could experience a long and painful recession.

Fellow citizens, we must not let this happen. I appreciate the work of leaders from both parties in both houses of Congress to address this problem and to make improvements to the proposal my administration sent to them. There is a spirit of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans and between Congress and this administration. In that spirit, I've invited Senators McCain and Obama to join congressional leaders of both parties at the White House tomorrow to help speed our discussions toward a bipartisan bill.

I know that an economic rescue package will present a tough vote for many Members of Congress. It is difficult to pass a bill that

commits so much of the taxpayers' hard-earned money. I also understand the frustration of responsible Americans who pay their mortgages on time, file their tax returns every April 15th, and are reluctant to pay the cost of excesses on Wall Street. But given the situation we are facing, not passing a bill now would cost these Americans much more later.

Many Americans are asking, how would a rescue plan work?

After much discussion, there is now widespread agreement on the principles such a plan would include. It would remove the risk posed by the troubled assets, including mortgage-backed securities, now clogging the financial system. This would free banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses. Any rescue plan should also be designed to ensure that taxpayers are protected. It should welcome the participation of financial institutions large and small. It should make certain that failed executives do not receive a windfall from your tax dollars. It should establish a bipartisan board to oversee the plan's implementation, and it should be enacted as soon as possible.

In close consultation with Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, and SEC Chairman Chris Cox, I announced a plan on Friday. First, the plan is big enough to solve a serious problem. Under our proposal, the Federal Government would put up to \$700 billion taxpayer dollars on the line to purchase troubled assets that are clogging the financial system. In the short term, this will free up banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses, and this will help our economy grow.

Second, as markets have lost confidence in mortgage-backed securities, their prices have dropped sharply. Yet the value of many of these assets will likely be higher than their current price, because the vast majority of Americans will ultimately pay off their mortgages. The Government is the one institution with the patience and resources to buy these assets at their current low prices and hold them until markets return to normal. And when that happens, money will flow back to the Treasury as these assets are sold. And

we expect that much, if not all, of the tax dollars we invest will be paid back.

A final question is, what does this mean for your economic future?

Well, the primary steps—purpose of the steps I have outlined tonight is to safeguard the financial security of American workers and families and small businesses. The Federal Government also continues to enforce laws and regulations protecting your money. The Treasury Department recently offered government insurance for money market mutual funds. And through the FDIC, every savings account, checking account, and certificate of deposit is insured by the Federal Government for up to \$100,000. The FDIC has been in existence for 75 years, and no one has ever lost a penny on an insured deposit, and this will not change.

Once this crisis is resolved, there will be time to update our financial regulatory structures. Our 21st century global economy remains regulated largely by outdated 20th century laws. Recently, we've seen how one company can grow so large that its failure jeopardizes the entire financial system.

Earlier this year, Secretary Paulson proposed a blueprint that would modernize our financial regulations. For example, the Federal Reserve would be authorized to take a closer look at the operations of companies across the financial spectrum and ensure that their practices do not threaten overall financial stability. There are other good ideas, and Members of Congress should consider them. As they do, they must ensure that efforts to regulate Wall Street do not end up hampering our economy's ability to grow.

In the long run, Americans have good reason to be confident in our economic strength. Despite corrections in the marketplace and instances of abuse, democratic capitalism is the best system ever devised. It has unleashed the talents and the productivity and entrepreneurial spirit of our citizens. It has made this country the best place in the world to invest and do business, and it gives our economy the flexibility and resilience to absorb shocks, adjust, and bounce back.

Our economy is facing a moment of great challenge. But we've overcome tough challenges before, and we will overcome this one. I know that Americans sometimes get dis-

couraged by the tone in Washington and the seemingly endless partisan struggles. Yet history has shown that in times of real trial, elected officials rise to the occasion. And together we will show the world once again what kind of country America is: a nation that tackles problems head on, where leaders come together to meet great tests, and where people of every background can work hard, develop their talents, and realize their dreams.

Thank you for listening. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:01 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential nominee John McCain; and Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Michel Sleiman of Lebanon

September 25, 2008

**President Bush.** It is my honor to welcome the President of Lebanon here to the Oval Office. Mr. President, there are a lot of Lebanese Americans who are paying attention to this visit. They care deeply about their ancestors. They want Lebanon to be free and sovereign and independent, and so do I, and so do you.

I have watched very carefully your initial statements upon being sworn in as President, and it—your statement impressed me. And we're most impressed by the national dialog that you're holding in attempt to seek reconciliation. The United States is proud to stand by your side. Our mission is your mission: a country that is strong and capable and a country where people can live in peace.

And so I welcome you. It's been a long time since the President of Lebanon has been in the Oval Office. And it has been my—it is my honor to host you for this occasion. So I welcome you, and I'm looking forward to our dialog.

**President Sleiman.** Thank you. Well, I am delighted to be here visiting the White House and visiting with you, President Bush.

I am here to thank you for all the efforts that you have undertaken in order to support Lebanon, particularly the military institutions of Lebanon.

We are also very proud of Lebanese Americans, who are around a million of them here, occupy very important position in the United States. And they work very sincerely for their country here as well as for their original homeland.

Mr. President, we share with the United States many of the human values and many of the cultural values. We promote and we believe very strongly in democracy and the principles of democracy. We believe in the promotion of liberty, all liberties, as well as the protection of human rights.

Mr. President, we work against bigotry and those who try to promote it, and certainly, we work very hard to combat terror. There are so many things in common between the American people and the Lebanese people.

We are here also to reaffirm our right in having a prosperous Lebanon, a democratic Lebanon, a country that it is diverse in its nature and through its people, but that in itself is wealth—the wealth of the power—and the power of the people of Lebanon. And that adds to the value of the Middle East and the Arab world and the entire world.

Mr. President, we are also here to reaffirm the need to liberate all Lebanese territories and also to make it very clear that the future of Palestinian refugees is in their homeland, not in Lebanon. Mr. President, we believe that this is in the interest of Lebanon as well as it's in the interest of the Palestinian people themselves.

Thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Yes, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Sleiman spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

### **Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority**

*September 25, 2008*

**President Bush.** Mr. President, welcome back. You and I have met a lot since I have

been the President and you have been the President. And I appreciate your determination and your desire to have a Palestinian state, and I share that desire with you.

It's not easy. No doubt it must be frustrating at times for you, because it's hard work to get a state after all these years. But nevertheless, there is a firm determination on your part and on my part to give the Palestinians a place where there can be dignity and hope.

We are working hard with you on security matters. We're working hard with you on helping the international community help you get the economy going in the West Bank. And I welcome you back.

As you know, I've got 4 more months left in office, and I'm hopeful that the vision that you and I have worked on can come to pass. And my only pledge to you is that I'll continue to work hard to see that it can come to pass. And so I welcome you back, and I think it's safe for me to say, I welcome you back, my friend.

**President Abbas.** Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I am delighted, as well as the members of my delegation, to come here again to Washington and meet with you. We've met together for numerous times. Mr. President, we know very well how important this issue is for you, and we will continue to work very hard together in order to realize your vision of two states living side by side.

There is no doubt that you have done a great deal, Mr. President, and you have exerted a great deal of efforts aiming at achieving that vision that we will work together to achieve. Your efforts, Mr. President, as well as your vision, both help us and the Israelis to work very hard during the last year and since the convening of the Annapolis conference. Hope will remain, Mr. President. We cannot live without hope. We will continue to work to achieve and realize that hope.

And, Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you and thank the United States for the help and the support and the aid that you have given us, and as well as the efforts that you led to mobilize the world to help the Palestinian Authority

in—on the economic front as well as on the security front.

Mr. President, we will continue to work with you, and we will continue to keep the hope alive in order to reach a political solution for our issue and for the Middle East.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:13 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Abbas spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

### Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Members of Congress

*September 25, 2008*

I want to thank the leaders of the House and the Senate for coming. I appreciate our Presidential candidates for being here as well.

We are in a serious economic crisis in the country if we don't pass a piece of legislation. I want to thank the spirit of bipartisan cooperation that's taking place here in Washington. One thing the American people have to know is that all of us around the table take this issue very seriously, and we know we've got to get something done as quickly as possible. And this meeting is an attempt to move the process forward. My hope is that we can reach an agreement very shortly.

I want to thank the Secretary of the Treasury for working hard with the Members. I thank the Members for working long hours like they've been doing to come up with a solution that's bipartisan and that will solve the problem.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama; and Republican Presidential nominee John McCain. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India

*September 25, 2008*

**President Bush.** Mr. Prime Minister, once again, it's my honor to welcome you back to the Oval Office, and it will be my honor to share a meal with you tonight. I thank you for coming to Washington from New York. It's very kind of you to come. I appreciate your friendship, and I appreciate your leadership.

You and I have worked hard to change the relationship between our countries. India is a great country with an incredibly bright future. And it's in the U.S. interests to have a good, strong strategic relationship with India. And we've worked hard to achieve that.

One such sign of that relationship is the India-U.S. civilian nuclear agreement. This has taken a lot of work on both our parts, a lot of courage on your part. And of course, we want the agreement to satisfy you and come—get out of our Congress. And so we're working hard to get it passed as quickly as possible.

We talked about trade. We talked about the environment and how technologies will make it such that we can grow our economies and be good stewards of the environment.

I'll never forget my visit to your country, Mr. Prime Minister. I remember telling my friends, when I got back, what an exciting place India is. There's a vibrancy and energy, and there's a entrepreneurial spirit that's very strong. And I congratulate you and your government for enhancing that entrepreneurial spirit.

I thank you for your advice on a range of matters. I appreciated very much your briefing on the neighborhood in which you live. It's very informative, and it helps me make decisions and helps me formulate policy.

All in all, ours is a very strong relationship, at a state level and at a personal level. And I appreciate you coming.

**Prime Minister Singh.** Mr. President, I know how busy you are with problems relating to the management of the financial crisis. That despite all these enormous pressures on

your time, you have found it possible to receive me is something I deeply appreciate, deeply value. And the last 4½ years that I have been Prime Minister, I have been the recipient of your generosity, your affection, the show of your friendship. It means a lot to me and to the people of India.

In these last 4½ years, there has been a massive transformation of India-United States relations. And, Mr. President, you have played the most important role in making all this happen. Your efforts towards cooperation with regard to civil nuclear energy—I know these were difficult issues, and at each stage, it was your leadership, your personal intervention which resolved all the difficulties that were affecting the progress of this negotiation.

I sincerely hope that the settlement which is now before the U.S. Congress will be approved in a manner which will be satisfactory from the point of view of both our countries. And when history is written, I think it will be recorded that President George W. Bush played an historic role in bringing our two democracies closer to each other.

I am mentioning civil nuclear initiative because for 34 years India has suffered from a nuclear apartheid. We have not been able to trade in nuclear material, nuclear reactors, nuclear raw materials. And when this restrictive regime ends, I think a great deal of credit will go to President Bush. And for this I am very grateful to you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** Yes, sir.

**Prime Minister Singh.** But there has been enormous transformation in our relationship in many other respects. The United States is India's largest trading partner. The United States is the largest investor in our country. And at President Bush's initiative, we set up a two-country CEOs forum which has come forward with many innovative ideas to bring the business communities of our two countries closer to each other.

We have taken new initiative in the field of education. We have today a new architecture of bringing the academic communities of our two countries—the new scheme of Fulbright-Nehru Scholarship will unite the intellectual community of our two countries in a manner which gives me immense satisfaction.

In areas of science and technologies, in the areas relating to environment management, in the areas relating to climate change, in areas relating to health, in areas relating to knowledge initiatives in agriculture—all of these initiatives have emerged as a result of the historic meeting that I had with President Bush on 18th July of 2005. These are the reasons we have now a strategic partnership with the United States. And all that has happened has happened because of the strong personal commitment of the President.

India is a functioning democracy. And I know how much President Bush appreciates that fact, that a country of a billion people with tremendous poverty, with all the diversities of the world, is yet trying to find its economic and social salvation in the framework of a functioning democracy. President Bush and I have discussed this aspect of India's functioning several times, and he has shown enormous respect for India, for Indian democracy.

So, Mr. President, this may be my last visit to you during your Presidency, and let me say that—thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

**Prime Minister Singh.** The people of India deeply love you, and all that you have done to bring our two countries closer to each other is something history will not be able to destroy.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

**Executive Order 13473—To Authorize Certain Noncompetitive Appointments in the Civil Service for Spouses of Certain Members of the Armed Forces**

*September 25, 2008*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 3301 and 3302 of title 5, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Policy.** It shall be the policy of the United States to provide for the appropriately expedited recruitment and selection of spouses of members of the Armed Forces for appointment to positions in the competitive service of the Federal civil service as part of the effort of the United States to recruit and retain in military service, skilled and experienced members of the Armed Forces and to recognize and honor the service of such members injured, disabled, or killed in connection with their service.

**Sec. 2. Definitions.** As used in this order:

(a) the term “agency” has the meaning specified for the term “executive agency” in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include the Government Accountability Office;

(b) the term “Armed Forces” has the meaning specified for that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code;

(c) the term “active duty” means full-time duty in an armed force and includes full-time National Guard duty, except that, for Reserve Component members, the term “active duty” does not include training duties or attendance at service schools.

(d) the term “permanent change of station” means the assignment, detail, or transfer of a member of the Armed Forces serving at a present permanent duty station to a different permanent duty station under a competent authorization or order that does not:

- (i) specify the duty as temporary;
- (ii) provide for assignment, detail, or transfer, after that different permanent duty station, to a further different permanent duty station; or
- (iii) direct return to the present permanent duty station; and

(e) the term “totally disabled retired or separated member” means a member of the Armed Forces who:

- (i) retired under chapter 61 of title 10, United States Code, with a disability rating at the time of retirement of 100 per cent; or
- (ii) retired or separated from the Armed Forces and has a disability rating of 100 percent from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Sec. 3. Noncompetitive Appointment Authority.** Consistent with the policy set forth

in section 1 of this order and such regulations as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management may prescribe, the head of an agency may make a noncompetitive appointment to any position in the competitive service, for which the individual is qualified, of an individual who is:

(a) the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces who, as determined by the Secretary of Defense, is performing active duty pursuant to orders that authorize a permanent change of station move, if such spouse relocates to the member’s new permanent duty station;

(b) the spouse of a totally disabled retired or separated member of the Armed Forces; or

(c) the unmarried widow or widower of a member of the Armed Forces killed while performing active duty.

**Sec. 4. Administrative Provisions.** The heads of agencies shall employ, as appropriate, appointment authority available to them, in addition to the authority granted by section 3 of this order, to carry out the policy set forth in section 1.

**Sec. 5. General Provisions.** (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

- (i) authority granted by law to a department or agency or the head thereof; and
- (ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative functions.

(b) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
September 25, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 29, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26,

and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on September 30.

**Memorandum on Assignment of Function Under Section 203(e)(2)(A) of the Andean Trade Preference Act, as Amended**

September 25, 2008

*Memorandum for the United States Trade Representative*

*Subject:* Assignment of Function Under Section 203(e)(2)(A) of the Andean Trade Preference Act, as Amended

I propose to suspend Bolivia's designation as a beneficiary country under the Andean Trade Preference Act, as amended (the "Act"), and as an Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act beneficiary country.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code and the Act, you are hereby assigned the function vested in me by section 203(e)(2)(A) of the Act (19 U.S.C. 3202(e)(2)(A)), to publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing the proposed action set forth above.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26.

**Remarks on the National Economy**

September 26, 2008

Good morning. My administration continues to work with the Congress on a rescue plan. And we need a rescue plan. This is—it's hard work. Our proposal is a big proposal, and the reason it's big and substantial is because we got a big problem.

We also need to move quickly. Now, any time you have a plan this big, that is moving this quickly, that requires legislative approval, it creates challenges. Members want to be heard. They want to be able to express

their opinions, and they should be allowed to express their opinions.

There are disagreements over aspects of the rescue plan, but there is no disagreement that something substantial must be done. The legislative process is sometimes not very pretty, but we are going to get a package passed. We will rise to the occasion. Republicans and Democrats will come together and pass a substantial rescue plan.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. on the Colonnade at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Remarks on the United States Ocean Action Plan**

September 26, 2008

Thank you all. Thank you, Secretary Clough, for the introduction. And congratulations on the opening of the Sant Ocean Hall, which, by the way, opens tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock. The Secretary and I just had a fabulous tour. These exhibits in this hall will remind people that our oceans are vital for our planet. This is going to heighten awareness of how important our oceans are and that we have a solemn duty to protect them.

And so I've come not only to see the hall and to herald its opening but to spend a little time talking about ocean conservation. There are a lot of people in this room who care about ocean conservation, and I appreciate you working on—with us to help preserve a vital natural resource.

First of all, I do want to recognize the Chancellor of the Smithsonian Institute's Board of Regents—I call him the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; Justice Roberts, thank you for coming. I appreciate very much the Sant family, Roger and Vicki. Roger turns out to be the Chairman of the Institute's Board of Regents and a big supporter, obviously, of the Smithsonian; otherwise, they probably wouldn't have named the hall for him. [Laughter] But thank you for your generosity and your support.

Cristian Samper is the Director of the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History,

and he gave us a tour today. And he's a knowledgeable fellow, a biologist, and he will make sure that these exhibits remain relevant for the—you know, for the education of the American people. And I want to thank you, Cristian, for your service.

I'm proud to be here with a member of my Cabinet, Carlos Gutierrez, Department of Commerce, which oversees NOAA, which had something to do with this facility. I want to thank Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo; there she is. Madeleine, good to see you; thank you for coming. She is from Guam. I appreciate the winners of the National Ocean Art Contest who are here today; that would be you all.

I'm about to talk about some policy we've been implementing, and I want to thank all those in the room for helping. There's a lot of folks around the country and here in Washington who care deeply about the oceans. And many of the organizations that have worked constructively with our administration are here, and I thank you for your efforts, because the truth of the matter is that we have got a good record working with you. And I want to share some thoughts about it.

First of all, you got to know I like oceans. I didn't grow up in the ocean—as a matter of fact—near the ocean—I grew up in the desert. Therefore, it was a pleasant contrast to see the ocean. And I particularly like it when I'm fishing. It turns out, it's a—I'm not the first President liked to fish. It turns out, the first President really liked to fish. George Washington—I was reading where he one time caught 100,000 herring in a single day. That's either a lot of fish or a lot of fishing. [Laughter] But unlike that George W., I have not had that kind of luck before. [Laughter]

America is a maritime nation. Obviously the—protecting the oceans are in our interest. It turns out that commercial and recreational fishing add more than \$76 billion to our economy every year. Seaport-related businesses add an estimated \$2 trillion in economic activity. And the oceans are important for our economic, you know, as an economic lifeline. They're important to our economy. Seas also offer limitless opportunities for recreation and transportation and

education and research. It all adds up to the fact we got to be good stewards.

And so we developed what we've called the Ocean Action Plan. I'm a guy who likes—when people walk into my office, I like to say, you know, what are the specific steps, and how are we doing at achieving them? This particular plan started off with 88 different points of action, expectations; we've met 87 of them. When the Senate passes a treaty, we will have met 88 of them. And it's—[applause].

Many of you in this room helped develop the plan. Many of you helped implement the plan, and I thank you. The goal was to make our oceans' coasts and Great Lakes cleaner, healthier, and more productive. I want to spend a little time talking about some of the successes.

Under the Ocean Action Plan, we've worked to stop overfishing. Last year, I issued an Executive order protecting two of our Nation's most popular game fish, striped bass and red drum. I signed important legislation reauthorizing the Magnuson-Stevenson [Magnuson-Stevens] \* Act, which sets a firm deadline to end overfishing in America by 2011. Many in this hall helped pass that piece of legislation, and I thank you. Thanks to these and other efforts, we are beginning to see good progress toward ending overfishing.

At the beginning of my administration, 44 fish stocks were listed as overfished. Today, almost half of those stocks are no longer on the list. That's good news. Along the way, we've stepped up our efforts to identify additional fish stocks that are at risk, and we're going to take steps to protect them.

We're protecting and restoring vital wetland and marine habitats. In 2004, I set a goal of restoring, improving, and protecting 3 million acres of interior and coastal wetlands in 5 years. We met that goal 1 year ahead of schedule. This effort includes our watershed restoration project in the Florida Everglades, which is the largest in the world. During my administration, we have put two-thirds of Federal waters, about 2.3 million square nautical miles, off-limits to harmful

\* White House correction.

bottom-trawling and dredging. We care what happens in the oceans.

We made a special effort to protect the tropical forests of the sea, coral reefs. Some of the most spectacular reefs are found in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument, which I created in June of 2006, thanks to the efforts of many in this hall. This monument is the world's largest fully protected marine conservation area, and it covers more than 7,000 marine species, a quarter of which are found nowhere else on Earth.

We've promoted a culture of cooperative conservation. Through programs like the Coastal America Partnership, we joined with State and local governments, fishermen and tribal leaders and tens of thousands of volunteers to improve conservation from the Great Lakes to the gulf coast. One project, which is dear to my heart, is when folks from the private sector helped to restore 10,000 acres of tidal wetlands in my home State. For decades, this area could be the equivalent of a dust bowl, just neglected. Today, it's a thriving ecosystem filled with shorebirds and abundant fish.

Cooperative conservation works; it makes sense. It's a strategy that's easy to implement when you find people willing to step up and do their part.

We're increasing international cooperation to protect the ocean environment that affects all nations. Through the Coral Triangle Initiative, we're working with nations like Indonesia and Malaysia and the Philippines and Australia to identify and eliminate the threats to tropical reefs. President Yudhoyono of Indonesia gets a lot of credit for this initiative. He is bound and determined to protect coral reefs around his nation, and we are bound and determined to help him do so by providing money, strategy, expertise, and encouragement. At the United Nations, we succeeded in passing a resolution to help protect fish stocks and marine habitats from destructive fishing practices.

A lot of our citizens don't understand what's taking place in parts of the world, but people use dynamite to fish, or they poison the fish stocks in order to net them, or they use destructive bottom-trawling. And we're

using our influence to stop those kind of practices.

We're expanding ocean research. There is more left to learn about the oceans; there's probably more to learn about the oceans than we need to learn about the Moon—or that we know about the Moon. And so to help unlock these mysteries, we've launched a 10-year Ocean Research Priorities Plan. Research supported by the plan is helping to reduce shipping's impact on the environment, improve our understanding of important ocean conditions like red tides, teach us more about the oceans' role in climate change, and improve our ability to protect Americans from natural disasters like hurricanes and tsunamis.

We're expanding educational programs to teach citizens more about the oceans. The truth of the matter is, there's a knowledge gap between what scientists and biologists understand about oceans and what our citizens understand about it. So we've ensured that teachers and students and the public have access to the most up-to-date marine science. Laura was particularly moved when she went out to the Hawaiian National Monument to learn about the effects of debris—you know, people just dropping stuff all over their boats, and it gets in these currents and kills birds and clogs the ecosystem. She's been very active about educating the young and old about the importance of making sure we're wise about marine—not—stopping marine debris. The Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center network is an interesting, innovative idea where the public can learn hands on about sea life at more than 20 of America's top aquariums. So there will be kiosks in each aquarium that are connected to here, as well as around the Nation, and people can get information at their fingertips.

The great achievement, of course, is this new hall. It's built through a partnership between NOAA and the Smithsonian. It's going to introduce visitors to all kinds of interesting things: prehistoric predators; what life is like around the coral reef; an animated display of the oceans' impact on the global environment. It's worthwhile for our citizens to come here. I think you're going to learn a lot. As part of the exhibit's opening, a half-mile-long

mural of ocean art by children from 110 countries will show visitors to the National Mall the beauty of sea life around the world. And of course, we thank those artists. My favorite exhibit was the 24-foot giant squid. That's—the squid was brought all the way from Spain as a joint operation between the Navy and the Air Force—[laughter]—appropriately called Operation Calamari. [Laughter] I do want to thank our military for bringing the deal here. It is—[laughter]—it's worth looking at it. [Laughter] Admiral, I don't know if you had anything to do with it, but it's—if you did, it must have been a heck of an operation. [Laughter]

And then people are going to come here and they're going to be amazed to see a 45-foot replica of a female Right Whale. There are fewer than 400 North Atlantic Right Whales left in the world. And the model in this hall is inspired by a whale that got tangled in fishing gear, but got herself free. She was given the appropriate name of Phoenix. And under the Ocean Action Plan, we've worked hard to protect whales like her. Part of the 88 different actions we've taken was to work on smart whale policy. And people in this room have helped. For example, we now require fishermen to use more whale-friendly gear. Based on a careful study of where Right Whales and ships are most likely to collide, we've rerouted the shipping lanes near Boston Harbor. The action reduced the danger to Right Whales like the Phoenix by nearly 60 percent.

And there are going to be new regulations that will be coming to be shortly that require ships to slow down as they approach seaports where these whales are likely to be.

In all these ways, the Ocean Action Plan is helping to protect our planet's most essential natural resource. Yet we're going to do more. And so I've asked—I've told people I'm sprinting to the finish; I mean, 4 months, you can actually get a lot done. And so I've asked the Secretaries of the Interior, Commerce, and Defense as well as the CEQ Chairman to work to find additional areas in the Pacific that could be eligible for Federal protection. We will improve our wetlands work by protecting, restoring, and improving an additional 4 million acres. It's important to set clear goals. We have set clear goals

in this administration, we have met those goals, and, in this case, we're setting a new goal. We will expand the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the Davidson Seamount. This 585-square-nautical-mile addition will safeguard one of the largest known seamounts in U.S. waters, and it will protect an extraordinary array of ocean creatures.

All Americans have a responsibility and obligation to be good stewards of our environment. And one person who understands that is Pietro Parravano. I met Pietro today. He is a commercial fisherman in Half Moon Bay, California. He was as excited to see this exhibit as I was. When a project to expand the nearby Port of Oakland threatened the bay's fishing grounds, Pietro helped broker an agreement that allowed the expansion of the port while protecting Half Moon Bay. Pietro has continued his cooperative conservation work at the local, State, and Federal and international levels. This fisherman has been honored by NOAA and the EPA. He says: "Conservation needs to be everyone's priority, because the oceans belong to all Americans."

I don't know where you are, Pietro, but—somewhere around here—wherever you are—there he is. Thanks, Pietro. Only in America. We're sure glad you're here, and thanks for your work. Like, people—Pietro shows that, you know, you can make a difference in your communities; it's just not all that hard. And part of the purpose of this fantastic facility is to encourage people to do that when it comes to the oceans.

I believe that the research that's going on and the actions that will be taken by this administration, and hopefully, future administrations will say to our children and grandchildren: we saw our responsibility, and we met it; that those of us who work here in Washington came here to be a constructive force, to see problems before they became acute, and we did something about it. And for those of you in this room who are doing something about it, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and so will future generations of Americans. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Sant Ocean Hall at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. In his remarks, he referred to

Pietro Parravano, secretary, San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Commissioners.

### **Remarks Following a Video Teleconference With Military and Civilian Leaders in Afghanistan**

*September 26, 2008*

**President Bush.** President, welcome. I'm pleased to be joined by President Karzai and members of his Government, as we've just had a discussion with our fellow citizens represented here on the screen. We had a real-time SVTS with PRT members in Kunar and Nangarhar Provinces in Afghanistan, plus the Governors—the Afghan Governors.

My reaction to our conversation is, one, there was promise and progress. No question, it's difficult. But if you listen to the people who are actually on the ground working with the citizens of Afghanistan on matters such as agriculture or education or infrastructure, you'll understand why I said that there is progress and promise and hope.

And so I want to thank my fellow citizens, Mr. President, in your presence, for their sacrifice and service. Three of the PRT members are here—Provincial Reconstruction Teams. This is a central part of a counterinsurgency strategy, which combines economic development, education, infrastructure with security, all aiming to help this young democracy not only survive but to thrive, so that it never becomes a safe haven for those would do us harm again.

I've had a grand experience in dealing with President Karzai. He and I have known each other for a long time.

**President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.** Exactly.

**President Bush.** We—I can remember when I was informed that our special forces rescued President Karzai during the liberation of Afghanistan. He was stuck out there wondering whether he was going to make it—

**President Karzai.** Top of the mountain.

**President Bush.** We sent some good troops in and pulled him out. And he has served his country then, and he's served his country now as the President. And I admire your leadership and your determination to

succeed. And I want to welcome you here. I want to let you know that the United States is committed to the people of Afghanistan. We will stand by your side and do the hard work necessary to achieve our objective. And our objective is for you to become a thriving democracy and to deny Al Qaida and other extremists a safe haven or a base from which to launch their murderous attacks.

Welcome.

**President Karzai.** Thank you, President. Mr. President, thank you very much for seeing me and my delegation once again—so graciously, and with tremendous hospitality, as always, in the White House.

Mr. President, my trip this time to Washington, as I insisted to be here with you, is for one reason alone, and that is to thank you and, through you, the American people for all that you have done for Afghanistan. You can't imagine here in Washington, especially at the White House, how much difference you have made to the lives of the Afghan people by your personal commitment to Afghanistan, by your commitment for the betterment of Afghan life, for the security of the Afghan people, the democracy of the Afghan people, for education and health and all that we discussed earlier with the PRTs and the Afghan Governors.

At times in this, the span of 7 years, we have come across issues that gives us a feeling as if things were slowing down. That is not the impression that we have in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has made progress that we would have not been able to make in 50 years or 60 years—what you have done in the past 6 or 7 years. We have rebuilt in 4 years more than 3,500 of our roads. We have millions of children. We have more than 85,000 of our babies, infants, and children now saved each year. Infant mortality is down; health care from 9 percent to 85 percent. National reserves, I will share that for you now, from \$180 million of 2002 to \$3.5 billion today—over \$3 billion today.

Life is better. Of course we have challenges, and the challenges will continue to face us as we move ahead. The success is already there; the success will be completed. You will be leaving office, Mr. President, together with the Vice President, in a few months from today, but I would like you to

remember as you leave office that Afghanistan will remember you tremendously, nicely, with affection. And you are there in our memory in a golden plate. Come and visit us so we can show it to you in a manner that we do traditionally in Afghanistan.

**President Bush.** Yes, sir.

**President Karzai.** It's an honor to have associated with you, to have had your friendship and to have had your support and to have had your patience with me and some of our habits up there. [Laughter]. Very, very nice of you. I have yelled at times; I've been angry at times, but you've always been smiling and generous, and that's so nice of you.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

**President Karzai.** Thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

**Proclamation 8294—To Implement Amendments to the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003**  
September 26, 2008

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

1. Section 3A(b)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–61) (the “Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act”), as amended by section 6(a) of the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta’s Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–286) (the “JADE Act”), directs the President to prohibit the importation of jadeite and rubies mined or extracted from Burma, as well as the importation of articles of jewelry containing jadeite and rubies mined or extracted from Burma (Burmese covered articles), until such time as the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that Burma has met the conditions described in section 3(a)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act.

2. Sections 3A(c)(1) and 3A(c)(2) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, set forth certain conditions for the importation of jadeite and rubies mined or

extracted from countries other than Burma, as well as for the importation of articles of jewelry containing jadeite and rubies mined or extracted from countries other than Burma (non-Burmese covered articles).

3. Section 3A(c)(2) of the Act, as amended, also permits the President to waive the conditions for importation set forth in section 3A(c)(1) of non-Burmese covered articles from any country with respect to which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the country has implemented certain measures to prevent the trade in Burmese covered articles.

4. In order to implement the prohibitions on the importation of Burmese covered articles and the conditions for importation of non-Burmese covered articles set forth in sections 3A(b)(1), 3A(c)(1), and 3A(c)(2) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, it is necessary to modify the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) to include an additional U.S. Note to chapter 71.

5. Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “1974 Act”) (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of relevant provisions of that Act, or other acts affecting import treatment, and of actions taken thereunder, including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

6. Sections 3A(b)(2) and 3A(c)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, authorize the President to issue such proclamations, regulations, licenses, and orders, and conduct such investigations, as may be necessary to implement the prohibition on Burmese covered articles set forth in section 3A(b)(1) of that Act and the conditions for importation of non-Burmese covered articles set forth in sections 3A(c)(1) and 3A(c)(2) of that Act.

7. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Homeland Security, pursuant to sections 3A(b)(2) and 3A(c)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, to issue regulations, licenses, and orders, and conduct such investigations as may be necessary, to implement

the prohibition on importation of Burmese covered articles set forth in section 3A(b)(1) of that Act and the conditions for importation of non-Burmese covered articles set forth in sections 3A(c)(1) and 3A(c)(2) of that Act. I further determine that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Homeland Security to redelegate, as necessary, any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government consistent with applicable law.

8. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to perform the functions set forth in section 3A(c)(2)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, relating to the issuance waivers of the conditions for importation set forth in section 3A(c)(1) of non-Burmese covered articles from any country that has implemented certain measures to prevent the trade in Burmese covered articles. I further determine that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to redelegate, as necessary, any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government consistent with applicable law.

9. Section 3A(b)(3)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, directs the President to take all appropriate actions to seek issuance of a draft waiver decision by the Council for Trade in Goods of the World Trade Organization (WTO) granting a waiver of the applicable WTO obligations with respect to the provisions of section 3A of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, and any measures taken to implement it.

10. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the United States Trade Representative to perform the functions specified in section 3A(b)(3)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

11. Section 3A(b)(3)(B) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, directs the President to take all appropriate actions to seek the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations General Assembly expressing the need to address trade in Burmese covered articles and calling for the creation and implementation of a workable cer-

tification scheme for non-Burmese covered articles to prevent the trade in Burmese covered articles.

12. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of State to perform the functions specified in section 3A(b)(3)(B) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

13. Section 3A(g) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, directs the President to, not later than January 26, 2009, transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing what actions the United States has taken during the 60-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of the JADE Act to seek (i) the issuance of a draft waiver decision by the Council for Trade in Goods of the WTO, as specified in section 3A(b)(3)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended; (ii) the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations General Assembly, as specified in section 3A(b)(3)(B) of that Act; and (iii) the negotiation of an international arrangement, as specified in section 3A(f)(1) of that Act.

14. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of State, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative, to perform the functions specified in section 3A(g) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

15. Under section 3(b) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended by section 6(c) of the JADE Act, the President may waive the restrictions described above if the President determines and notifies the Committees on Appropriations, Finance, and Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations, Foreign Affairs, and Ways and Means of the House of Representatives that to do so is in the national interest of the United States.

16. I have determined that it is appropriate to authorize the Secretary of State to perform the functions and authorities specified in section 3(b) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 3 and

3A of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended by section 6 of the JADE Act, section 604 of the 1974 Act, and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, do proclaim that:

(1) In order to implement the prohibition on the importation of Burmese covered articles and the conditions for the importation of non-Burmese covered articles provided for in sections 3A(b)(1) and 3A(c)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, an additional U.S. Note as set forth in the Annex to this proclamation is included in chapter 71 of the HTS.

(2) Beginning on September 27, 2008, the importation into the United States of any Burmese covered article shall be prohibited, except as provided for (i) in section 3A(d) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended; (ii) in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this proclamation and section 3A(b)(2) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended; or (iii) by waiver issued pursuant to section 3(b) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(3) Beginning on September 27, 2008, as a condition for the importation into the United States of any non-Burmese covered article, the importer and exporter of such article must meet the conditions set forth in section 3A(c)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, except as provided for (i) in section 3A(d) of that Act; (ii) in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses issued pursuant to this proclamation and section 3A(c)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended; or (iii) by waiver issued pursuant to either section 3(b) or section 3A(c)(2) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(4) The Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Homeland Security are hereby authorized, pursuant to sections 3A(b)(2) and 3A(c)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, to issue regulations, licenses, and orders, and conduct such investigations as may be necessary, to implement the prohibition on Burmese covered articles set forth in section 3A(b)(1) of that Act and the conditions for importation of non-Burmese covered articles set forth in sections

3A(c)(1) and 3A(c)(2) of that Act. The Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Homeland Security are further authorized to redelegate, as necessary, any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government consistent with applicable law.

(5) The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is hereby authorized to perform the functions set forth in section 3A(c)(2)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended, relating to the issuance of waivers of the conditions for importation set forth in section 3A(c)(1) of non-Burmese covered articles from any country that has implemented certain measures to prevent the trade in Burmese covered articles. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government consistent with applicable law.

(6) The United States Trade Representative is hereby authorized to perform the functions specified in section 3A(b)(3)(A) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(7) The Secretary of State is hereby authorized to perform the functions specified in section 3A(b)(3)(B) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(8) The Secretary of State is hereby authorized, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative, to perform the functions specified in section 3A(g) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(9) The Secretary of State is hereby authorized to perform the functions specified in section 3(b) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, as amended.

(10) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 30, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation and its attached annex will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 1.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### **September 20**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Bush greeted President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia.

#### **September 21**

In the evening, the President had separate telephone conversations with Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr., and President Hu Jintao of China to discuss the financial markets situation.

#### **September 22**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to New York City, NY, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Joey Rizzolo, Jr.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Colts Neck, NJ, where, at a private residence, he attended a Lance-Myers New Jersey Trust reception. Later, he traveled to the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, NY.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a U.S. heads of state reception.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Gustav from August 28 to September 8.

#### **September 23**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then had a telephone conversation with Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr., to discuss the financial markets situation. Later, he traveled to the United Nations Headquarters.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Governors Island, where they participated in a photo opportunity with dissidents. Later, they returned to the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

In the evening, the President traveled to the United Nations Headquarters, where he met with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations. Later, he returned to the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

#### **September 24**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to the Council of the Americas, where he participated in a meeting on free trade with Western Hemisphere leaders. Later, he and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Republican Presidential nominee John McCain to discuss the suspension of his political campaign and the financial markets situation. He also had a telephone conversation with Democrat Presidential nominee Barack Obama.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael S. Doran to be Assistant Secretary of State (International Information Programs).

The President announced his intention to nominate John Grasty Crews II to be Inspector General of the Small Business Administration.

The President announced his intention to appoint Duane R. Roberts, Donald J. Hall, Jr., and Joan Hotchkis as members of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to designate Elizabeth Johnson as Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety.

**September 25**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in a bill signing ceremony for S. 3406, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Then, also in the Oval Office, he participated in a photo opportunity and met with leaders of the Orthodox Union.

In the evening, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had dinner with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine to the White House on September 29.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul A. Quander, Jr., to be Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia.

The President announced his intention to nominate F. Chase Hutto III to be Assistant Secretary of Energy (International Affairs and Domestic Policy).

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board: Mark D. Abkowitz; Thure E. Cerling; David J. Duquette; and Ronald M. Latanision.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Council on the Arts: Chas Fagan; JoAnn Falletta; Lee Greenwood; and Barbara Ernst Prey.

The President announced his intention to designate Karthik Ramanathan as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Financial Markets).

**September 26**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met separately with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan and Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Republican Leader John A. Boehner to discuss the financial markets situation.

In the evening, in the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the 2008 National Book Festival Gala performance and dinner.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding associated with Hurricane Ike from September 12–14.

The President declared a major disaster in Alaska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the areas struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides from July 27–August 6.

The President announced his intention to nominate Irvin Mayfield as a member of the National Council on the Arts.

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**Nominations  
Submitted to the Senate**


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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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**Submitted September 26**

John Grasty Crews II,  
of New Mexico, to be Inspector General,  
Small Business Administration, vice Eric M.  
Thorson.

Michael S. Doran,  
of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary  
of State (International Information Pro-  
grams), vice John Stern Wolf.

Chas Fagan,  
of North Carolina, to be a member of the  
National Council on the Arts for a term expir-  
ing September 3, 2014, vice Jerry Pinkney,  
term expired.

JoAnn Falletta,  
of New York, to be a member of the National  
Council on the Arts for the remainder of the  
term expiring September 3, 2012, vice  
Foreststorn Hamilton.

Lee Greenwood, of Tennessee, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2014, vice Makoto Fujimura, term expired.

F. Chase Hutto III, of Michigan, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (International Affairs and Domestic Policy), vice Karen Alderman Harbert, resigned.

Irvin Mayfield, of Louisiana, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2014, vice Karen Lias Wolff, term expired.

Kathryn A. Oberly, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice Michael W. Farrell, retired.

Barbara Ernst Prey, of New York, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2014, vice Mark Hofflund, term expired.

Paul A. Quander, Jr., of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia for a term of 6 years (reappointment).

Philip P. Simon, of Indiana, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, vice Kenneth F. Ripple, retired.

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### Checklist of White House Press Releases

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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#### **Released September 19**

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley on the upcoming U.N. General Assembly\*

#### **Released September 20**

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 6456 and S. 2450

Fact sheet: Strengthening American Prosperity Through Trade

#### **Released September 22**

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Mississippi

#### **Released September 23**

Transcript of a conference call press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto on the national economy

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 5683

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Indiana

Fact sheet: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century

#### **Released September 24**

Statement by the Press Secretary on the resignation of Elias A. Zerhouni as Director of the National Institutes of Health

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2617

Text: Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas

#### **Released September 25**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

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\* This briefing was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 20.

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 3406

***Approved September 22***

***Released September 26***

H.R. 5683 / Public Law 110-323  
Government Accountability Office Act of 2008

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

***Approved September 24***

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 5938

S. 2617 / Public Law 110-324  
Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2008

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Alabama

***Approved September 25***

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Alaska

S. 3406 / Public Law 110-325  
ADA Amendments Act of 2008

Fact sheet: Protecting Our Oceans

***Approved September 26***

Fact sheet: The U.S.-India Relationship: A Strategic Partnership

H.R. 5938 / Public Law 110-326  
To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide secret service protection to former Vice Presidents, and for other purposes

Fact sheet: Making Afghanistan More Secure