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Iran

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. The talks between Iran and the EU–3 appear to be making little progress. A senior British official there said that they detect nothing new in their approach. What can be done now?

The President. Well, obviously, one option is for the Perm 5 to work together to bring Iran to the U.N. Security Council. That's an option. And we're going to continue to work with our friends and allies to present a united front to the Iranians. And the message is: Give up your nuclear weapons ambitions. And the good news is, most of the world recognizes that Iran, being the nontransparent society that it is, a Government that had violated IAEA rules, is one that cannot be trusted with technology that could enable it to develop a nuclear weapon. And so we're united in our goal to keep the Iranians from having a weapon, and we're working on the tactics necessary to continue putting a united front out.

The other thing is that we want the people of Iran to be able to live in a free society. And so tomorrow night, I am going to talk about this issue and make clear the policy of the United States.

Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

Palestinian Elections/Hamas

Q. Mr. President, Israeli officials are seeking an international boycott of a Palestinian Government that includes Hamas. Do you support this? And if so, isn't that punishing the Palestinian people for exercising the democratic rights that you've called for in the region?

The President. The Hamas party has made it clear that they do not support the right of Israel to exist. And I have made it clear, so long as that's their policy, that we will not support a Palestinian Government made up of Hamas. We want to work with a Government that is a partner in peace, not a Government that is—whose declared intentions might be the destruction of Israel.

Secondly, this new democracy that's emerging in the Palestinian Territories must understand that you can't have a political party that also has got an armed wing to it; that democracies yield peace. And so the second half of our message to Hamas is: Get rid of your arms; disavow terrorism; work to bring what you promised to the people of the Palestinian Territories. Listen, these folks ran on the campaign, "We're going to get rid of corruption," and that "We're going to provide services to the people," and that's positive. But what isn't positive is that they've got parts of their platform that will make it impossible for them to be a peaceful partner.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:06 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Statement on Senate Action To Vote on the Nomination of Samuel A. Alito, Jr., To Be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court

January 30, 2006

I am pleased that a strong, bipartisan majority in the Senate decisively rejected attempts to obstruct and filibuster an up-or-down vote on Judge Sam Alito's nomination. The Senate has a constitutional responsibility to hold an up-or-down vote on every judicial nominee, and throughout its 216-year history, the Senate has held an up-or-down vote on every Supreme Court nominee with majority Senate support. Judge Alito is extraordinarily well-qualified to serve on our Nation's highest Court, and America is fortunate that this good and humble man is willing to serve. I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Sam Alito as the 110th Justice of the Supreme Court.

Proclamation 7977—Fourth Anniversary of USA Freedom Corps, 2006

January 30, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans enjoy great liberty and prosperity, and with these blessings comes an obligation to reach out to those in need. Over the past 4 years, USA Freedom Corps has

worked to rally America's armies of compassion and bring together individuals and organizations committed to volunteer service. More than 65 million people volunteered in 2005, an increase of 6.5 million since 2002. As we celebrate the fourth anniversary of USA Freedom Corps, we recognize the many Americans who have stepped forward to help others, and we underscore our commitment to serving our Nation and people around the world.

USA Freedom Corps was created to build on the countless acts of service, sacrifice, and generosity that followed the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In the wake of the devastating tsunami of 2004 and hurricanes of 2005, Americans have continued to demonstrate that the true strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. By reaching out to aid the victims of these tragedies, people across our country helped rebuild shattered lives and communities. Their acts of service again demonstrated that by loving our neighbors as ourselves, we can offer hope and healing to those who suffer.

USA Freedom Corps is dedicated to expanding volunteer service and extending the goodwill of the American people. To help support our communities, respond to crises at home, and spread compassion around the globe, USA Freedom Corps works to strengthen public service programs such as the Peace Corps, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Citizen Corps. USA Freedom Corps encourages and promotes the good work of non-profit, faith-based, and community organizations. Through the President's Greeter Program and the President's Volunteer Service Award, USA Freedom Corps and the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation recognize Americans who have made serving their neighbors a central part of their lives. USA Freedom Corps has also created a comprehensive network of volunteer opportunities to help more Americans find ways to get involved in serving their communities.

Through USA Freedom Corps, my Administration will continue to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in our country. To learn more about opportunities for volunteering, citizens can visit the USA Freedom Corps website at www.volunteer.gov. By working together for a cause greater than self, we can strengthen our Nation, one person, one neighborhood, and one community at a time.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the Fourth Anniversary of USA Freedom Corps. I call upon the citizens of this great country to find ways to volunteer and help their fellow Americans. I commend the efforts of USA Freedom Corps and all those who have already answered the call to serve, and I encourage all Americans to donate their time, energy, and talents to the work ahead.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 1, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 2.

Statement on the Death of Coretta Scott King

January 31, 2006

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Coretta Scott King. Mrs. King was a remarkable and courageous woman and a great civil rights leader. She carried on the legacy of her husband, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., including through her extraordinary work at the King Center. Mrs. King's lasting contributions to freedom and equality have made America a better and more compassionate nation. Laura and I were fortunate to have known Mrs. King, and we will always treasure the time we spent with her. We send our condolences and prayers to the entire King family.