

strongly brought it up, and she was an advocate for the Filipino veterans bill, which has been an issue around here for a long period of time.

Q. [Inaudible]

President Bush. Good question. I hope by December 1st.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group, Muslim separatists operating in the southern Philippines.

Joint Statement Between President George W. Bush and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines on the 50th Anniversary of the U.S.-Philippine Alliance *November 20, 2001*

The United States and the Republic of the Philippines today commemorated the 50th anniversary of the signing of the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty, during the visit of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to Washington, D.C.

On this historic occasion, the two Presidents reaffirmed that U.S.-Philippine relations are based on shared history, common values, a commitment to freedom and democracy, and vigorous economic ties. They observed that our alliance is an alliance between two peoples, with 120,000 Americans resident in the Philippines and over two million Americans of Filipino descent living in the United States. Presidents Bush and Macapagal-Arroyo asserted that the strong historical, cultural and personal links between the Philippine and American people will continue to keep our alliance strong and vital in a changing world.

In commemorating the anniversary, President Bush acknowledged the brave contribution that Filipino Veterans of World War II have made to freedom and democracy, and stated that he will carefully consider all legislative proposals to ensure the sacrifices of these veterans are recognized.

President Bush and President Macapagal-Arroyo agreed that the Mutual Defense Treaty has been vital in advancing peace and stability in the Asia Pacific for the past

half a century. They noted that the alliance remains a pillar of the U.S. security presence in Asia, which helps preserve a strategic balance that favors freedom and promotes prosperity throughout the region. The two leaders further agreed that the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, and the terrorist activities of the Abu Sayyaf Group or ASG (which now hold both Filipino and American hostages in the southern Philippines), underscore the urgency of ensuring that the two countries maintain a robust defense partnership into the 21st century.

To further this goal, the two leaders underscored their determination to strengthen their military alliance on a sustained basis, through increased training, exercises, and other joint activities. President Bush thanked President Macapagal-Arroyo for her uncompromising leadership in the global campaign against terror and expressed deep appreciation for the moral support and assistance her government has provided the United States in its time of need. The two Presidents declared that the American and Filipino people stand together in the global campaign against terrorism. Noting that the future peace and prosperity of the world are at stake in the current conflict, both leaders renewed their commitment to the U.S.-Philippine alliance and expressed confidence that the international coalition

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will emerge victorious over the forces of terror.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines *November 20, 2001*

President George W. Bush and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo today reaffirmed the strength and warmth of bilateral relations and commemorated the 50th anniversary of the signing of the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty. While celebrating the achievements of half a century of defense cooperation, the two Presidents agreed that the alliance remains vital to both nations, particularly in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

President Bush conveyed his deep appreciation for President Macapagal-Arroyo's leadership in the fight against terror, both within the southern Philippines and against international terrorist networks. He specifically noted with appreciation Philippine offers of logistical and other support to the coalition, as well as President Arroyo's efforts to forge a regional ASEAN approach to combating terror. President Bush also welcomed passage of new anti-money laundering legislation as a concrete step in the global effort against terrorism, and offered to provide technical assistance to help the Philippines effectively implement the new law. Emphasizing U.S. support for a strong, united ASEAN, President Bush further offered all appropriate assistance to help ASEAN improve its capacity to combat transnational threats, including terrorism and the illegal narcotics trade.

The two Presidents agreed that the war against terrorism should be fought in parallel with the war against poverty, and that the most effective and least-costly anti-poverty bilateral cooperation measure would be to work together to open markets world-

wide. The two Presidents, therefore, resolved to work closely to expand trade bilaterally, regionally and globally, particularly in the context of the Doha Development Agenda. President Bush agreed to work with the United States Congress to provide the Philippines over \$1 billion in Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits. He also noted that the growth rate of quotas of U.S. imports of textiles and apparel from the Philippines would increase by 27 percent beginning in January 2002, in accordance with U.S. commitments to the WTO. The two leaders directed their Trade Ministers to reinvigorate and convene the U.S.-Philippine Trade and Investment Council within the first half of 2002.

Some long-standing issues are being resolved even before these missions, including approval of Philippine mangos for export to the United States. USDA and the Philippine Department of Agriculture further signed a Memorandum of Agreement on November 19 to renew and expand activities involving wide-ranging scientific, technological, and agribusiness cooperation. USDA will make available guarantee programs of \$150 million for U.S. agricultural exports and equipment to the Philippines that support the modernization of Philippine agriculture and fisheries. Arrangements are also being made to provide up to \$40 million in PL-480 food aid for fiscal year 2002, subject to budget allocations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo emphasized her government's commitment to fight poverty, accelerate economic reform, enhance