

against terror. We have worked together closely, and will continue to do so, to combat the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other extremist forces in Central Asia. We welcome the removal of the Taliban from power in Afghanistan, while noting with concern the presence of Taliban and Al-Qa'ida remnants that wish to continue to destabilize the regional situation. Our two countries pledge to support the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan in its efforts to rebuild that country and integrate it into the broader international structure. We will make all necessary efforts to facilitate the provision of aid to Afghanistan, and urge our global partners in this effort to fulfill their pledges of reconstruction aid.

We jointly note the threat that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses to international peace and security, and declare our steadfast opposition to such proliferation. In this regard, we commend the United Nations Security Council for its unanimous passage of Resolution 1441, and call on the Government of Iraq to comply fully with the terms of the resolution by allowing unfettered inspections and destroying all of its weapons of mass destruction.

Recognizing the importance of democratic political systems, rule of law, and market-oriented economic policies in providing for the welfare and stability of our societies, we pledge to further develop the economic relationship between the United States and the Republic of Tajikistan, while working jointly to carry out democratic and legal reforms within Tajikistan that expand fundamental freedoms and human rights.

We further underscore the importance of rule of law as a prerequisite for economic development. The United States welcomes the efforts Tajikistan has made to integrate its economy into the global market, and will continue to assist Tajikistan in reforming its legal structures to better provide for rule of law and economic freedom with the goal of encouraging investment in the Republic of Tajikistan.

We state our commitment to the principles of democracy and human rights, and pledge to work jointly to extend and strengthen civic institutions such as free and independent media, democratic elections, political pluralism, and civil society. In this spirit, we reaffirm our commitment to basic human rights as enshrined in the founding documents of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, of which we are both members. We further make clear our concern regarding the worldwide problem of trafficking in persons, and pledge our mutual assistance to combat in both of our countries this modern form of slavery. Finally, we confirm our joint efforts to enhance understanding between the citizens of our two countries. In this regard, the U.S. government has initiated a substantial program to enhance computer connectivity for Tajikistan's schools, and the U.S. Peace Corps will consider sending an assessment team to Tajikistan in 2003 with the view of establishing a country program there.

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

Statement on the National Strategy To Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction

December 11, 2002

Today I have issued the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The strategy establishes a comprehensive approach to counter the growing threat

from weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear, radiological, biological, and chemical weapons. This strategy is integral to the National Security Strategy of the United States of America and the National Strategy for Homeland Security. We will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten our Nation and our friends and allies with the world's most destructive weapons.

Weapons of mass destruction pose a grave danger. They could allow America's adversaries to inflict massive harm against our country, our military forces abroad, and our friends and allies. Some rogue states, including several that support terrorism, already possess WMD and are seeking even greater capabilities as tools of coercion. For them, these are weapons of choice intended to deter us from responding to their aggression against our friends in vital regions of interest. For terrorists, WMD would provide the ability to kill large numbers of our people without warning. They would give them the power to murder without conscience on a scale to match their hatred for our country and our values.

Our national strategy to combat WMD is based on three pillars. We will pursue robust counterproliferation policies and capabilities to deter and defend against the use of these weapons. We will strengthen nonproliferation measures to prevent states and terrorists from acquiring WMD. We will increase our preparations to respond effectively to any use of WMD against us or our friends and allies. To succeed, we must use new technologies, strengthen our intelligence capabilities, work even more closely with allies, and establish new partnerships with other key states, including former adversaries.

The need to prevent, deter, defend against, and respond to WMD threats presents our Nation with a difficult and complex challenge. The strategy I have issued today asks much of our Federal Government, our State and local institutions, and indeed, every citizen. The threat is real and the stakes are high. Success against this threat is a requirement of history—one that the United States will meet with confidence and determination.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

December 12, 2002

The President. Thanks a lot for the warm welcome. It's a pleasure to be back in Philadelphia, a city known for the history that was made here and the spirit of compassion which is found here.

I'm honored to spend the time with you all. I thank you for your interest in our country. You love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength. You love your neighbor. And by the works that come from your faith, you are building a more just and generous nation. And we are grateful for your efforts.

I appreciate the tremendous turnout for this White House Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. I think it's a really important conference. Many faiths and many traditions are represented here. Yet we share the same belief that every person in need is a worthy child of God. And we share the same goal: We must bring the hope and healing of faith-based services to more and more Americans.

Government has often been slow to recognize the importance of faith-based and community efforts. That's changing, and