

Statement on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Decision on
Planning for the Defense of Turkey
February 19, 2003

I welcome today's decision by NATO's Defense Planning Committee to approve the deployment of AWACS aircraft, Patriot missiles, and biological and chemical defense equipment to Turkey. This is an important demonstration of the solidarity of NATO Allies in view of a potential threat to an Alliance member. It follows the decision taken on Sunday by the same committee to request military planning for such deployments.

Today's decision is a direct response to the request by Turkey for consultations under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty as well as the commitment by all NATO

Heads of State and Government, stated at Prague on November 21, 2002, "to take effective action to assist and support the efforts of the U.N. to ensure the full and immediate compliance by Iraq, without conditions or restrictions, with UNSCR 1441."

I am grateful for the resolute leadership of NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson in bringing the Alliance discussions to a successful conclusion. I also appreciate the efforts of all the members of the Defense Planning Committee to fulfill their responsibilities as Alliance members in exceptionally difficult circumstances.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
February 19, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with section 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 2002, through January 31, 2003. The previous submission covered events from October 1, 2002, through November 30, 2002.

My Administration was particularly active during this reporting period in supporting U.N. Secretary-General Annan's efforts to foster a comprehensive Cyprus settlement on the basis of the plan he has proposed. Although such a settlement did not emerge at the European Union's Summit in Copenhagen in December, intense diplomatic activity has continued. Secretary Powell, Under Secretary Marc Grossman, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, and

Ambassador to Cyprus Michael Klosson are encouraging all relevant parties to maintain a spirit of compromise and a commitment to reaching an agreement by February 28, 2003. I will do the same as part of our continuing commitment to the U.N. effort to find a just and lasting settlement for Cyprus.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard G. Lugar, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20.

Remarks in Kennesaw, Georgia
February 20, 2003

Thank you all very much. Thanks a lot. So, I'm on my way down to Crawford, and I thought it would be wise to stop in Cobb County. And I'm glad I did. Thank you for that incredibly warm welcome. It is wonderful to be here at Harrison High. I'm honored to be in the presence of the principal, Donnie Griggers. I want to thank he and his staff—he and his fine staff for putting up with the entourage. [Laughter] I appreciate all the teachers here at Harrison High. I want to thank you for teaching. Yours is a noble profession, an important profession, and all of us who care about our children and our children's future thank you for teaching and sharing your wisdom and your love for our children.

I appreciate the Harrison High students who are here. Listen to your teacher and your mother, by the way. I'm still listening to mine. [Laughter] But I'm honored the students are here, and thank you for sharing your facility with us.

I've come to your school to talk about the need for this Nation to assume responsibilities, that we have a responsibility to keep the peace and to protect the homeland, that we have a responsibility to make sure this economy is strong so people can find work. We have a responsibility to nourish the entrepreneurial spirit of America. We have that responsibility. And I want to talk to you about the need for all of us to assume our responsibilities as we go through life.

If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you're responsible for loving that child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're a citizen of democracy, you're responsible for participating in the political process. If you're a leader, you're responsible for doing what you think is right on behalf of all of the citizens. And that's why I'm so honored—[applause].

Those of us in office have the responsibility to reject partisan politics which divides our Nation, that—ugly politics, which says, if so and so wins, such and such has got to lose—the zero-sum politics that oftentimes enters the discourse of Washington, DC. We have a responsibility to lift up issues beyond the mud pit of politics.

And that's why I'm so honored to be standing here with Democrat Senator Zell Miller, American first. He is the kind of fellow that tells you exactly what he thinks. If he agrees with you, he tells you he agrees with you. If he doesn't agree with you, he'll tell you that, too. [Laughter] One thing you can be certain of, he puts his country ahead of the political party. I'm proud to call him friend. I listen to him. And I'm proud of the fact that he is going to sponsor the tax relief plan I'm going to tell you about in a minute.

I'm also proud to be traveling with Saxby Chambliss, newly elected Senator from Georgia. These two Senators make a fine combination on behalf of all the people. Your State is really well represented in the Halls of the United States Senate.

I'm proud to be with the man who's got one of the greatest jobs in America, the Governor of the State of Georgia. It's interesting we're here with Sonny in a school, because I understand his passion for public education. He understands that's the number one priority of any State. And I believe a result of his leadership and working with the teachers and principals and administrators and parents, education in this great State is going to flourish for every single child. No child is going to be left behind in the State of Georgia.

We've got the members of the mighty Georgia congressional delegation with us. I say "mighty" because they're mighty strong. And I'm mighty proud to call them