

to form the most comprehensive picture of the terrorist threats we face. The TTIC will also play a lead role in overseeing a national counter-terrorism tasking and requirements system and in maintaining an up-to-date database of known and suspected terrorists that will be accessible to appropriate officials at all levels of government. The TTIC represents an important milestone in our effort to improve collaboration between and among the intelligence and law enforcement communities.

These efforts and others are improving available information and systems while planning for the development of compatible information systems. This will allow Federal, State, and local entities to share information nationwide that will ultimately con-

tribute to securing our borders and protecting our Nation.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Orrin G. Hatch, chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Pat Roberts, chairman, Senate Committee on Intelligence; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary; and Porter J. Goss, chairman, House Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on North Atlantic Treaty Organization Enlargement

March 25, 2003

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On August 26, 2002, I submitted a report “regarding each country being actively considered for NATO membership.” That report was prepared pursuant to section 3(2)(E)(i) of the Resolution of Ratification to the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, adopted on April 30, 1998.

As you know, on November 22, 2002, I joined the other leaders of NATO in inviting Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to become members of NATO. I am firmly convinced that the membership of these nations will advance the cause of freedom, and make NATO stronger for the future.

Section 3(2)(E)(ii) of the 1998 Resolution of Ratification requires classified and unclassified updates to the report submitted on August 26, 2002. As stated in that Resolution, “Prior to the signing of any protocol

to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of any country, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report, in classified and unclassified forms:

- (I) updating the information contained in the report required under clause (i) with respect to that country; and
- (II) including an analysis of that country’s ability to meet the full range of the financial burdens of NATO membership, and the likely impact upon the military effectiveness of NATO of the country invited for accession talks, if the country were to be admitted to NATO.”

I am hereby providing this updated report, as prepared by my Administration. In doing so, I note with appreciation the continued and strong bipartisan support that the Congress has shown on the issue of NATO enlargement.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee

on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Duncan Hunter, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26.

## Remarks at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida March 26, 2003

*The President.* Thank you all. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. General DeLong, thanks for such a kind introduction. Laura and I are really proud to be here with the good men and women of CENTCOM and MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

We are pleased to see so many family members who are here. We want to—we thank you for coming. And I want you to know your Nation appreciates your commitment and your sacrifice in the cause of peace and freedom.

We're also proud to be here today with our friends and allies, representative of the 48 nations across the world who have joined America in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Over the last week, the world has witnessed the skill and honor and resolve of our military in the course of battle. We have seen the character of this new generation of American Armed Forces. We've seen their daring against ruthless enemies and their decency to an oppressed people. Millions of Americans are proud of our military, and so am I. I am honored to be the Commander in Chief.

I appreciate very much General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who has joined us from Washington, DC, today. He is representative of the caliber of our generals. He's one of the finest people I know. I'm proud you're here, General Pace. Thank you for rep-

resenting the Marine Corps so well, and all the fighting men and women.

I'm proud, also, to be here with Charles Holland, commander of SOCOM; the wing commander of MacDill Air Force Base, Colonel Tanker Snyder. He told me that was his given name, Tanker. [*Laughter*] That's a heck of a name, Tanker. [*Laughter*]

Of course, I'm really proud of your Governor.

*Audience members.* God bless you, sir! [*Laughter*]

*The President.* I want to thank members of the Florida congressional delegation who flew down with us today on Air Force One, starting with the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, a Floridian committed to making sure our military has what it takes to win war and, therefore, be able to keep the peace—the chairman, Bill Young. As well, Congressman Jim Davis, Mike Bilirakis, Adam Putnam, and Katherine Harris came down today. I know we've got some of the mayors from the local area here: Rick Baker, Brian Aungst, and my old buddy Dick Greco, the mayor of Tampa, Florida—for being here.

I want to thank everybody in uniform who is here today. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your love of America. I appreciate the members of the United States Coast Guard who are here today. Our Coast Guard is deployed in the