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Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations in New York City
September 23, 2003

Mr. Secretary-General; distinguished members of the United Nations community; excellencies; ladies and gentlemen: America is honored that you all are here. Since the founding of the U.N. more than 50 years ago, my country has been proud to host this organization. I'm pleased to join you in opening the 58th session of the U.N. General Assembly. Mr. Secretary-General, I am grateful for your leadership, and I'm proud to call you friend.

The United Nations has suffered great loss in the cause of peace. The terrorist attack against the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad took the lives of 22 servants of peace, including Sergio de Mello, a man who dedicated his life to promoting human rights throughout the world. The people of my country mourn with you. We share your resolve to continue this important work. We gather in this city, at this Assembly, to meet urgent challenges of our time. We will work together to promote peace and human dignity.

Mr. Secretary-General, with admiration for you and with confidence in the future of this organization, I offer a toast to your leadership and to the United Nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Special Representative for Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-General Annan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a United States Reception in New York City
September 23, 2003

The President. Thank you all very much. Please be seated. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Not everyone has a seat.

The President. Unless you don't have a chair. [*Laughter*] For the sake of world harmony, I will give a short speech—[*laughter*]—and then we can all go to bed. [*Laughter*]

First, I want to thank the American Museum of Natural History for their wonderful hospitality. We've got trustees here and the leadership of this fantastic place. It's such a wonderful opportunity for Laura and me and our delegation to show off one of the really fantastic landmarks of New York City. So on behalf of our delegation, thanks for your wonderful hospitality. It's a beautiful place to have a wonderful reception.

Laura and I and the Secretary are honored to welcome the Presidents and Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers and U.N. Ambassadors and anybody else who managed to sneak in tonight. [*Laughter*] We're glad you're here. It's been a fantastic reception for us, and thank you for coming.

I really want to say quickly a word about Kofi Annan. I admire his decency and his vision and his compassion for our fellow human beings. He's a great leader of the United Nations, and we're proud to call him friend.

Somebody whispered in my ear that Mayor Bloomberg is here. He is the mayor of New York City. Michael is the mayor

of a great city. On September the 11th, this Nation saw the remarkable spirit of the people who live in this city. We'll always remember how our fellow citizens who happen to be New Yorkers instantly rallied to help their neighbors in need. New York's famous skyline was wounded, but its spirit remained steadfast.

In pursuing the terrorists, we honor the memory of the fallen, and we defend civilization itself. I want all the world leaders to remember that. In working to alleviate poverty, disease, and human suffering, we spread hope to millions, and we undermine the ideologies of resentment and hate and terror. The United Nations plays a vital role in all these efforts, and all our nations have a duty to advance its founding principles of tolerance and freedom and human rights.

A wing of this building is named for Theodore Roosevelt. He was one of my predecessors. He was a warrior for peace who faced the world without illusions, and I want to quote what he said. He said, "If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. We cannot avoid meeting great issues. All that we can determine for ourselves is whether we shall meet them well or ill."

He was speaking for Americans, but his words are true of every people in the world today. We're meeting great issues of security and compassion, and we must and we will meet them well.

Welcome to New York. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 p.m. at the American Museum of Natural History. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in New York City

September 24, 2003

President Bush. Listen, thank you all for coming. Gerhard and I just had a very good meeting. The first thing I told him, I said, "Look, we've had differences, and they're over, and we're going to work together." And I believe when Germany and America works together, we can accomplish a lot of positive things. We're both committed to freedom. We're both committed to peace. We're both committed to the prosperity of our people. And I reaffirmed to Gerhard that America and German relations are very important to this administration. I have said so repeatedly. I said so in the Bundestag, and I reiterated it today with the Chancellor.

We will work together in Afghanistan. I appreciate his efforts to help with a—help Iraq grow to be a peaceful and stable and democratic country. We talked about the Middle East. We talked about proliferation concerns. In short, we talked about the things we can do together to benefit mankind, and I'm really happy we had the meeting today.

Thank you, sir.

Chancellor Schroeder. I can only comment and very much confirm what the President has just said. We addressed a whole range of international topics, but we didn't just exclusively talk about international affairs. We also addressed the economic situation, because we feel that our problems, when it comes to that, are similar indeed. Both of our economies are by now so closely intertwined that it really makes sense to think about them conjointly.