

Remarks Following Discussions With President Vicente Fox of Mexico in Santiago

November 21, 2004

President Bush. Listen, thank you very much for coming, Mr. President. It's great to see you.

We've just had a very frank and constructive discussion about important issues regarding our two countries. I was very pleased to hear from the President that the economy in Mexico is growing, in large part thanks to his strong leadership. And that is very good news for the United States and our workers, because we have so much trade with Mexico.

We spent a great deal of time talking about the immigration issue. I told President Fox that I had campaigned on this issue. I made it very clear my position that we need to make sure that where there's a willing worker and a willing employer, that that job ought to be filled legally in cases where Americans will not fill that job. I explained to the President that we share a mutual concern to make sure our border is secure. One way to make sure the border is secure is to have reasonable immigration policies. And finally, I assured him that we want people from Mexico treated with respect and dignity.

I look forward to working with my friend over the next couple of years to get a lot done for the benefit of both our countries.

President Fox. Thank you very much, Mr. President. This has been a very good opportunity to discuss the issues on our bilateral agenda. And I think that our friendship, our relationship is strong. It's a very optimistic one, and I think that we will continue to build on it to make this partnership even stronger.

And the first thing is that Mexico wants to fulfill its responsibility to make its economy grow, make it stronger, to have more jobs in Mexico. That is our first priority. And in order to do this, what we discussed today is that we are looking to the future. We're looking to the future in economic development with the United States and our bilateral relationship but also in the trilateral relationship with the region, in order to be able to grow, to generate more jobs, and generate more opportunity.

And we're going to be working on this purpose in order to further what we're trying to achieve in the area of social security, in order to be ever more efficient and competitive. And the other thing that we hope to do is to be able to meet later on in Washington, DC, and then finish off some of these issues we've been discussing, perhaps putting them in the shape of some form of agreement.

And as pointed out, this growth is leading to an increase in jobs, particularly in the border area, and this, in turn, generates more opportunities for our people.

And finally, I extended my congratulations to President Bush on his reelection. We both stated that we are very willing to continue to build on our relationship and to do even more in the 2 remaining years of the Fox administration and the next 4 years of the Bush administration.

President Bush. Gracias.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:27 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Santiago. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Paris Club Agreement To Reduce Iraq's International Debt

November 21, 2004

I congratulate the Iraqi Interim Government and the Paris Club of creditor nations for today's agreement to reduce dramatically Iraq's international debt. The Iraqi people have an historic opportunity to build a free and democratic Iraq after more than two decades of political oppression and economic devastation under the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. The Paris Club agreement represents a major international contribution to Iraq's continued political and

economic reconstruction. I encourage non-Paris Club creditor nations to agree to comparable debt reduction for Iraq.

The Paris Club leadership deserves particular thanks for its efforts in making this agreement possible. I also commend Secretaries Powell and Snow and Special Presidential Envoy James Baker for their tireless efforts in working with creditor nations to reach this agreement.

The President's News Conference With President Ricardo Lagos of Chile in Santiago

November 21, 2004

President Lagos. My good friend President Bush, Laura, members of the President's delegation, members of my administration, authorities, friends: We're very pleased, for the third time this year, to meet with President Bush and to be able to continue in this way with a modern, mature relationship which our two countries have been able to achieve historically.

As I was telling you, you're not the first George Bush to come to La Moneda. His father was here when we worked in order to consolidate our democracy. But you're the first President to come here at the dawn of the 21st century. And as a consequence, we must use all our energies towards a future agenda, an agenda in which most of the time we will be in agreement; sometimes we won't. But that's life, and that's what a more mature and a richer agenda can do for you.

Our area of cooperation is extremely broad. We share essential values which make our ties stronger. We want democratic societies that are pluralistic, in which

the capacity for enterprise will be an opportunity for many—open societies. As we've said over the past few days, economic growth and trade are incompatible with terrorism and incompatible with corruption. For that reason, the decisions we're making at this APEC meeting.

Today too we have reviewed the progress of the free trade agreement between Chile and the United States. After 9 months of enforcement, this agreement has led to major results. Our shipments to the United States have increased by 27 percent. The shipments from the United States to Chile have increased by 25 percent. And the free trade commissions of both countries continue working in order to be able to fulfill the obligations we still have outstanding and, at the same time, to accelerate the removal of tariffs.

Today, for us in Chile, 1,350 companies are sending to the United States over 1,350 products, which ties in directly with the