

violence and for sovereignty, because only the defeat of violence will lead to sovereignty.

Mr. President, the United States and the international community applaud your rejection of terrorism. All who engage in terror are the enemies of a Palestinian state and must be held to account. We will stand with you, Mr. President, as you combat corruption, reform the Palestinian security services and your justice system, and revive your economy. Mr. President, you have made a new start on a difficult journey requiring courage and leadership each day, and we will take that journey together.

As we work for peace, other countries must step up to their responsibilities. Arab States must take concrete measures to create a regional environment conducive to peace. They must offer financial assistance to support the peaceful efforts of President Abbas, his Government, and the Palestinian people. And they must refuse to assist or harbor terrorists.

Israel must continue to take steps toward a peaceful future and work with the Palestinian leadership to improve the daily lives of Palestinians, especially their humanitarian situation. Israel should not undertake any activity that contravenes roadmap obligations or prejudice final status negotiations with regard to Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.

Therefore, Israel must remove unauthorized outposts and stop settlement expansion. The barrier being erected by Israel as a part of its security effort must be a security, rather than political, barrier. And its route should take into account, consistent with security needs, its impact on Palestinians not engaged in terrorist activities. As we make progress toward security and in accordance with the roadmap, Israeli forces should withdraw to their positions on September the 28th, 2000.

Any final status agreement must be reached between the two parties, and changes to the 1949 Armistice Lines must be mutually agreed to. A viable two-state

solution must ensure contiguity on the West Bank, and a state of scattered territories will not work. There must also be meaningful linkages between the West Bank and Gaza. This is the position of the United States today; it will be the position of the United States at the time of final status negotiations.

The imminent Israeli disengagement from Gaza, parts of the West Bank, presents an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a return to the roadmap. All parties have a responsibility to make this hopeful moment in the region a new and peaceful beginning. That is why I assigned General Kip Ward, who is with us today, to support your efforts, Mr. President, to reform the Palestinian security services and to coordinate the efforts of the international community to make that crucial task a success. The United States also strongly supports the mission of the Quartet's special envoy, Jim Wolfensohn, to make sure that the Gaza disengagement brings Palestinians a better life.

To help ensure that the Gaza disengagement is a success, the United States will provide to the Palestinian Authority \$50 million to be used for new housing and infrastructure projects in the Gaza. These funds will be used to improve the quality of life of the Palestinians living in Gaza, where poverty and unemployment are very high. I've also asked Secretary Rice to travel to Jerusalem and Ramallah before the beginning of the Israeli withdrawal. Secretary Rice will consult with Israelis and Palestinians on the disengagement, their shared commitments, and the way back on the roadmap.

As we work to make the disengagement succeed, we must not lose sight of the path ahead. The United States remains committed to the roadmap as the only way to realize the vision of two democratic states living side by side in peace and security. It is through the roadmap that the parties can achieve a final permanent status agreement through direct negotiations.

The people of the Middle East have endured a long period of challenge, and now we have reached a moment of hope. Leaders from around the world have made a moral commitment: We will not stand by as another generation in the Holy Land grows up in an atmosphere of violence and hopelessness. With concrete actions by the United States, the Palestinians, Israel, and other nations, we can transform this opportunity into real momentum.

Mr. President, we will work with you to help realize the dream of a free and democratic Palestine, to bring greater freedom, security, and prosperity to all peoples in the region, and to achieve the lasting peace we all seek.

Welcome back to the White House.

President Abbas. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'd like to thank you for this warm welcome and express my view in order to strengthen the relationship between Palestine and the United States. The Palestinian people share with the American people the same values of peace, freedom, and democracy. We are confident that the two peoples will benefit from continuing and developing this relationship.

Today we have conducted very intensive and constructive discussions with you, Mr. President, and with your senior administration officials. We discussed ways to support the opportunities to revive and resume the peace process in the Middle East. These discussions afford us with the opportunity to emphasize the central and essential role played by you, Mr. President, and by your administration in supporting and advancing the peace process toward the realization of your vision of ending the Israeli occupation that started in 1967 and the establishment of a democratic, free, and independent Palestine to live side by side with the State of Israel, in order to create a better future for the peoples of the region. We have reiterated again to you, Mr. President, our strong commitment to the peace option, and through negotiations, we can achieve—the two sides can achieve their objectives.

We also discussed the efforts that have been undertaken by the Palestinian Authority throughout the past few months to bring about calm. These efforts have brought about the reduction of violence to the lowest level in 4 years and once again reopened the window of hope for progress toward peace. We emphasized our determination to maintain and preserve this calm. The Palestinian Authority exerts a great deal of efforts in reforming our security organizations, and the truth is, our efforts are fully supported by our own people who repeatedly reaffirmed their commitment to peace and negotiations.

In our talks, we also discussed the ongoing democratic process in Palestine. This process has successfully presented, through the Presidential elections and the local and municipal elections, that the Palestinians have succeeded in carrying out transparent and fair elections under very difficult circumstances, another example of the capability of our people and their ability to build an independent democratic state once we achieve our freedom and our independence.

We expect that our people will be helped and supported to make their democratic experiment a successful one. We look forward to the free movement and the removal of Israeli roadblock and checkpoints and the Israeli withdrawal to positions prior to September 28th, 2000, and as well as implementing the various understanding that we have reached with the Israeli Government in Sharm al-Sheikh. We stress that democracy cannot flourish under occupation and in the absence of freedom.

In this regard, we expressed our deep concern over the continuous Israeli settlement activities and the construction of the wall on our land, particularly in the area of Jerusalem. These settlement activities, in addition to undermining President Bush's vision in establishing a Palestinian and contiguous state, that it is a viable state that can live side by side by the State of Israel,

also contributes to the feeling of frustration and despair and the loss of hope. Stopping this is one of the requirements of the road-map. Time is becoming our greatest enemy. We should end this conflict before it is too late.

We are extending our hands to the Israeli people in good intention. We are saying that peace and dialog and the recognition of the other side's rights is what will create a good neighborhood and achieve security and prosperity for our people and the peoples in the region.

We have assured the President that the Palestinian Authority is ready to coordinate with the Israeli side in order to ensure the success of its withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank upon the Israeli evacuation. We see this evacuation as a part of ending the occupation, and it should not be at the expense of the West Bank. We must then immediately move to permanent status negotiations to deal with the issues of Al-Quds—East Jerusalem—as a capital of the future state of Palestine, the issues of refugees, settlements, borders, security, and water, on the basis of President Bush's vision and on the basis of U.N. resolutions and the basis of the Arab Initiative.

It is time for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to end—right now. It is the time for our people, after many decades of suffering and disposessions, to enjoy living in freedom and independence on their own land. And we should accelerate the freedom of our prisoners in order to be a part of peacemaking.

Mr. President, we end our discussions in Washington, and we are more determined to move forward in the path of freedom, reform, and democracy. We depart Washington; we are more confident about the role that you will play and the role that your administration will play in order to move the process forward and achieve lasting peace.

Mr. President, at the end, I would like to thank you very much for your hospitality and expressing the American—and dem-

onstrating the American support to the Palestinian administration and the Palestinian people. We continue to look forward to work with you ahead in order to achieve our common objectives of peace, security, and democracy and freedom.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Bush. Good job, good job. Two questions a side, starting with Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Palestinian Democracy/Hamas

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, you just spoke about the rejection of terror. Are you satisfied that President Abbas is moving aggressively enough, doing everything he can to shut down terror groups? And do you think that he should, for example, close Hamas or remove from positions of power associates of Yasser Arafat?

President Bush. I believe that—and I know the President is committed to democracy. After all, he ran on a platform that said, "Vote for me. I'm for peace, and I believe in democracy." That's what he told the Palestinian people when he ran, and he won with 62 percent of the vote, I think it was. So in other words, he's committed. That's what he said he was going to do, and he's now fulfilling it.

Our position on Hamas is very clear. It's a well-known position, and it hasn't changed about Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist group. It's on a terrorist list for a reason. As the elections go forward, of course, we want everybody to participate in the vote. There is something healthy about people campaigning, saying, "This is what I'm for." The President ran on a peace platform. You know, maybe somebody will run on a war platform. You know, "Vote for me. I promise violence." I don't think they're going to get elected, because I think Palestinian moms want their children to grow up in peace just like American moms want their children to grow up in peace. As a matter of fact, I think the people that campaign for peace will win.

The goal of a—is, of course, a Palestinian state based upon rule of law, and you cannot have a democracy based upon rule of law if you have armed bands of people who will use their weapons to try to achieve a political outcome. We discussed this with the President. He can give you his own views. I will just tell you, he is—he believes strongly in democracy and understands that aspect of democracy.

And so I'm—I think there's something healing about asking people to vote. And hopefully, as more people participate and more people see progress on the ground in terms of real, tangible benefits when it comes to democracy like being able to make a living or being able to send your child to a school that works or being able to get good quality health care, that more and more people will reject the notion that the only—a state based upon violence is a positive state.

Israeli Settlements/Israeli Security Wall

Q. President Abbas, regarding settlements and the erection of the wall, are your positions before that you gave to your voters among the Palestinian public? And the question to President Bush, we heard your remarks. You talked about clear American position about the issue of settlements. But Israel continues to build settlements and continues to seize Palestinian territories. What is your position, Mr. President?

President Bush. Well, I told you what my position was. And it's exactly what I said when I was in Crawford, by the way, when Prime Minister Sharon was there as well. I mean, when you say you're going to accept the roadmap, you accept the roadmap, and part of the obligations of the roadmap is not the expansion of settlements. And we continue to remind our friends the Israelis about their obligations under the roadmap, just like we remind President Abbas about the obligations under the roadmap that the Palestinians have accepted. So nothing has changed.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters], yes.

Oh, I'm sorry. I beg your pardon.

President Abbas. The first one.

President Bush. I beg your—sorry, yes. Just trying to cut you off. [Laughter] It's an old Rose Garden trick.

President Abbas. Regarding the issue of settlements and the wall, our position is very clear from the beginning. When we talk about two states, we are talking about a Palestinian state within the boundaries of 1967. That means that those boundaries, in our views, should go back to the Palestinian people. This is what the roadmap states, and this is what is in various U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Also President Bush talked about ending the occupation that started in 1967. In our views, the wall—there is no justification for the wall, and it is illegitimate, as well as settlements. It is illegitimate and should not allow. We heard from the President that these activities should stop. I believe this is an important step in order to get to the permanent status negotiations. During the permanent status negotiations, we will put all these issues on the table. And we express our views that does not contradict international legitimacy.

President Bush. Now Adam.

Egyptian Presidential Elections

Q. Mr. President, President Bush, the First Lady, under the Egyptian pyramids this week, enthusiastically endorsed Mubarak's first steps towards direct Presidential elections. Two days later, Mubarak supporters attacked the opposition in the streets. Was it premature to back Mubarak? What's your message to Mubarak now?

President Bush. I also embraced President Mubarak's first steps and said that those first steps must include people's ability to have access to TV and candidates ought to be allowed to run freely in an election and that there ought to be international monitors. That's—and the idea of people expressing themselves in opposition to the government and getting a beating,

is not our view of how a democracy ought to work. It's not the way that you have free elections. People ought to be allowed to express themselves, and I'm hopeful that the President will have open elections that everybody can have trust in.

Final question here. Oh, sorry. That's what happens when you don't get called on.

Gaza/Palestinian Democracy

Q. To President Bush, Mr. President, Israel insists on controlling the Gaza airspace as well as the port, after its unilateral withdrawal. What practical steps are you prepared to take, sir, to deter Israel from doing so and ensuring that the Gaza disengagement remains an integral part of the roadmap?

And to President Abbas, in the article that was published in the Wall Street Journal today, you emphasized the link between democracy and freedom. Do you feel concerned that the new Palestinian democracy could go back under the occupation and under the lack of freedom? Thank you.

President Bush. Actually, my answer kind of ties into the question you asked the President. You know, one of the things when you are in the position I'm in, I'm able to observe attitudes and opinions. And clearly there's a lot of mistrust, and you can understand why. There's been war, violence, bloodshed. The only way to achieve all the objectives is for there to be a democracy living side by side with a democracy. And the best way to see—to solve problems that seem insoluble now is for there to be a society which evolves based upon democratic principles.

And so there's going to be a lot of issues that come up as this process evolves that are going to be difficult issues. But as more people trust each other, then those issues become easier to solve. And so one of my cautions to both sides in this very important problem is to make sure that we stay focused on getting things right initially, and what needs to happen is that Palestinians,

with the world's help, fill the void created by the withdraw from Gaza with a society which is hopeful. And that means people can find work, and people can send their kids to school, the health care system functions well.

I told the President, there's a lot of international help that will be available, particularly as his Government earns the trust of the donors. And the best way to earn the trust of the donors is to work to develop this—to take advantage of this opportunity and develop a state. Israel has obligations to help. You noticed, in my statement I said “help improve the humanitarian situation on the ground.” And America wants to help.

Now as a democracy evolves and people see that this is a Government fully capable of sustaining democratic institutions and adhering to rule of law and transparency and puts strong anticorruption devices in place, answers to the will of the people, that it becomes easier to deal with issues such as airspace. The West Bank will become an easier issue for everybody to meet obligations. We've got a fantastic opportunity now.

When I—I told the President, there's no doubt in my mind we can succeed. President Abbas is a man of courage. Part of the success is going to require courageous decision by the President. And I take great faith in not only his personal character but the fact that he campaigned on a platform of peace. He said, “Vote for me. I am for peace.” And the Palestinians voted overwhelmingly to support him.

And so there will be a series of issues that come up—you know, how do we deal with this issue, or how do you deal with that issue—all of which will become easier to deal with as the Government succeeds in Gaza. And the United States stands with the Government to help them succeed.

President Abbas. Thank you. Regarding the democracy and freedom, I am saying that when we have chosen democracy as a way of life, this was not an adventure.

This was a determination and a strategy that democracy is the only way to move forward and for life among different nations. But democracy is like a coin; it has two sides. On one side it's democracy; on the other side of the coin is freedom.

It's true, now we lack freedom, and we are in dire need to have freedom. We do not live in freedom in our homeland. This will weaken the hope to continue this democracy and will weaken the democratic march. But we will not go back. Our strategy is clear, and we are determined to achieve our freedom in order to complete

and achieve both sides of the coin, and we can live a normal life.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:31 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; outgoing World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. President Abbas spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Commencement Address at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland May 27, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. Secretary England, Admiral Clark, General Nyland, Vice Admiral Rempt, Captain Leidig, Dr. Miller, members of the Board of Visitors, Lieutenant Governor Steele and Congressman Hoyer, distinguished faculty, distinguished guests, proud parents, family, friends, and, most of all, the graduating midshipmen of the class of 2005, I'm honored to be here.

And I am proud to stand before the future leaders of the Navy and Marine Corps. And to celebrate the occasion, I thought I would bring along a small graduation gift. Too late to give you a "Staubach Day," so I'll do the next best thing. In keeping with longstanding tradition, I hereby absolve all midshipmen who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses. [Laughter] I will leave it to the Admiral to define exactly what "minor" means. [Laughter]

You worked hard to get to this moment. You survived Plebe Summer and having your parking tickets scraped. [Laughter] You climbed Herndon Monument and threw pennies at Tecumseh, god of the 2.0.

I knew him pretty well when I was in school. [Laughter] Now, at last, you've made it to graduation day, and in a few moments, you will receive your military commissions and your diplomas. Your parents are proud of you; your teachers are proud of you; and so is your Commander in Chief. Congratulations on a great achievement.

A lot has changed since you arrived at Annapolis 4 years ago. Navy football went 0 and 10 in your plebe year. This year, you went 10 and 2, and you won your second Commander in Chief's Trophy in a row. I'd like the record to show that your turnaround started the year after I delivered your commencement address. [Laughter] So to ensure the continued domination of Navy football, I thought I'd just swing by for a return visit.

When I spoke to the class of 2001, none of us imagined that a few months later we would suffer a devastating surprise attack on our homeland or that our Nation would be plunged into a global war unlike any we had known before. Today, we face

brutal and determined enemies, men who celebrate murder, incite suicide, and thirst for absolute power. These enemies will not be stopped by negotiations or concessions or appeals to reason. In this war, there is only one option, and that is victory.

Today I'm going to talk about our strategy for victory in this war, what we've accomplished to make our Nation more secure, your crucial role in this struggle, and why we need you to fight the war on terror and transform our military at the same time. In the 21st century, America will be prepared to answer any challenge and defeat any adversary.

Our Nation is pursuing a clear strategy for the war on terror. We're using every available tool to disrupt terrorists and their organizations. We are taking the fight to the enemy abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We're denying the terrorists sanctuary and making clear that America will not tolerate outlaw regimes that provide safe haven and support to terrorists. We're using all elements of national power to deny terrorists the chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons they seek. We will not allow mass murderers to gain access to the tools of mass destruction. And we're stopping terrorists from achieving their ideological victories they seek, by working to spread the hope of freedom and reform across the broader Middle East. We understand that free nations do not support terrorists or invade their neighbors. We understand to make the world more peaceful and our country more secure, we will advance the cause of liberty.

Thanks to the men and women of the United States military, our strategy is working; we are winning the war on terror. Since September the 11th, 2001, we've removed brutal regimes in Kabul and Baghdad that supported and harbored terrorists. We helped launch Afghanistan and Iraq on the path to lasting freedom by liberating over 50 million people. Both these nations have now chosen their leaders in free elec-

tions, and their courage is inspiring democratic reformers across the broader Middle East to rise up and claim their liberty.

To stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction, we broke up the world's most dangerous nuclear trading network. We convinced Libya's leader to give up his country's chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as his long-range ballistic missiles. Two years ago, we launched the Proliferation Security Initiative, an effort supported by 60 nations to stop shipments of weapons of mass destruction on land, at sea, and in the air. We have gone after Al Qaida and other terrorists with relentless determination, disrupting their communications, planning, training, and financing. We have put the enemy on the run, and now they spend their days avoiding capture, because they know that America's armed services are on their trail.

And we will stay on their trail. The best way to protect our citizens is to stay on the offensive. In the last few weeks, we've dealt the enemy a series of powerful blows. In Afghanistan, we brought to justice scores of terrorists and insurgents. In Pakistan, one of Usama Bin Laden's senior terrorist leaders, a man named al-Libbi, was brought to justice. In Iraq, we captured two senior operatives of the terrorist Zarqawi. And in recent days, our forces have killed or captured hundreds of terrorists and insurgents in Baghdad and western Iraq and near the Syrian border. Across the world, our military is standing directly between the American people and the worst dangers in the world, and Americans are grateful to have such brave defenders.

Difficult and dangerous work remains. Suicide bombers in Iraq are targeting innocent men, women, and children, hoping to intimidate Iraq's new leaders and shake the will of the Iraqi people. They will fail. Iraqis are determined, and our strategy is clear. We will train Iraqi forces so they can take the fight to the enemy and defend their own country, and then our troops will