

some other issues. We have also our roadmap in Iraq, which was decided by a political council of national security for solving other problems of Iraqi people.

We, again, expressed our gratitude to his Excellency, our dear friend, President George Bush, and to American people. We hope that America also understand that we are grateful to them, to the America, and we will never forget those friends who helped us in the difficult days of Iraq, and Iraq will be always in the future in very good relation and be the friend of the

United States and partner of United States in fighting against tyranny, dictatorship, and terrorism. You can count on the Iraqi people, Mr. President, in fighting against terrorism and for democratization of whole Middle East.

*President Bush.* Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:16 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. President Talabani referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement on Senate Passage of the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement

*September 19, 2006*

I commend the Senate for passing the U.S.-Oman free trade agreement, which will deliver benefits to both America and Oman. This agreement will level the playing field for U.S. workers and businesses, provide additional market access for U.S. goods, help Oman's leaders develop long-term opportunities for their people, and ad-

vance our shared goal of building a Middle East free trade area.

By strengthening our relations with a strategic friend and ally in the Middle East, this important agreement will also help protect America's national security interests.

I look forward to signing this legislation into law.

## Statement on Senate Confirmation of Alice S. Fisher as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice

*September 19, 2006*

I am pleased that the Senate acted today to confirm Alice S. Fisher as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice.

Alice is a talented and effective public servant. As Acting Assistant Attorney General, she has led hundreds of DOJ attorneys and other staff in their efforts to combat terrorism, gang violence, drug trafficking,

corruption, fraud, and crimes against children. I am confident she will continue to dedicate herself to keeping Americans safe from crime and bringing those who violate our laws to justice.

I continue to encourage the Senate to provide all of my nominees a prompt up-or-down vote.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Mahmoud Abbas of the  
Palestinian Authority in New York City  
September 20, 2006

*President Bush.* Mr. President, thank you for coming. Yesterday in my speech to the United Nations, I said that you're a man of peace who believes in a two-state solution. And after our conversation today, once again you confirmed that.

I, too, believe that the best way to bring peace to the Holy Land is for two democratic states living side by side in peace. I said in my speech yesterday that the Palestinian state must have territorial integrity. I firmly believe that. I also said in my speech that the—one of the great objectives of my administration is to achieve this vision. I fully understand that in order to achieve this vision, there must be leaders willing to speak out and act on behalf of people who yearn for peace, and you are such a leader, Mr. President.

I can't thank you enough for the courage you have shown. I assure you that our Government wants to work with you in order—so that you're able—capable of delivering the vision that so many Palestinians long for, and that is a society in which they can raise their children in peace and hope. And I know that society is possible. And I appreciate your vision along those lines.

So, welcome to Washington, DC [the United States]\*; I think this is our fifth visit. Every time, I've left our visits inspired by your vision.

*President Abbas.* Mr. President, thank you very much. I'm honored to meet with you, as you said, for the fifth time during these past years.

First of all, I would like to thank you greatly for the wonderful speech that you have delivered yesterday before the United

Nations, and talk about the Palestinian issues and your vision of two states, and you adopt this vision. Mr. President, you are the first American President to adopt the vision of two states living side by side.

Of course, I've talked with the President about the situation in the Palestinian Territories and the difficulties that the Palestinian people are facing, as well as the possible solution that can get us out of these difficulties. And I mentioned to the President that more than 70 percent of the Palestinian population, they believe in the two-state solution, a state of Palestine and a state of Israel living in peace and security next to each other. That means that the Palestinian people desire peace, and there is no power on Earth that can prevent the Palestinian people from moving toward the peaceful solution and living and coexisting in peace.

Of course, we look forward to activate the various plans and various resolutions and the roadmap in order to be in a position to reach, with our neighbors, the desired objectives.

We always, Mr. President—we look forward to your support and your help and your aid, because we are in dire need for your help and support. Mr. President, we will always be faithful and truthful to peace, and we will not disappoint you.

*President Bush.* Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. President Abbas spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

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\* White House correction.