

because I know the character and nature of our citizens. We're a decent land, a courageous land, and a compassionate land, and it is my honor to be the President of such a fine group of people.

Thanks for coming, and may God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Arnold A. Schwarzenegger of California; Gov. George E. "Sonny" Perdue of Georgia; Gov. Matt Blunt of Missouri; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With President Elias Antonio Sacca Gonzalez of El Salvador February 27, 2007

*President Bush.* *Puesta bienvenidos a mi amigo, el Presidente de nuestro amigo de El Salvador. Gracias.* Thanks for coming. We spent a lot of time talking together, because I value the advice of the President.

We talked about a lot of subjects. We talked about the fact that the first year of the trade agreement between the United States and El Salvador is coming up. And the President told me that a lot of people are benefiting—a lot of people in his country are benefiting from the opportunity presented by trade. And I told him that people in our country benefit from the relationship. Under his leadership, the economy of El Salvador is strong. And I congratulate you for your leadership.

We talked about interesting opportunities available. And one, of course, is biofuels. We both recognize that the development of biofuels is in our national interests. And I thank you for your vision.

We talked about the Millennium Challenge Account that the President has ably led. And it's going to enable people in the northern part of his country to realize the benefits of free trade and commercialism.

I expressed my concerns and our condolences about the three gentlemen who were recently assassinated, which led us into a broad discussion about security and my de-

sire to help the President deal with security issues.

And finally, the President reminded me that TPS expires next September. Every time he comes to the Oval Office, he's expressed his deep concern and strong support for his citizens that may be here in our country. And I assured him that I was openminded to his request, but more importantly, I'm working hard to get a comprehensive bill, immigration bill, passed out of the United States Congress.

And so, once again, we had a substantial and meaningful conversation. And that's what you expect when you have two friends together. *Gracias, señor.*

*President Sacca Gonzalez.* Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We have talked extensively with the President on varied—array of issues. And I spoke to President Bush about how meaningful his trip to Latin America is going to be, because this is going to give a signal that the United States is interested in Latin America.

*President Bush.* Thank you, sir.

*President Sacca Gonzalez.* We have talked about free trade. On March 1st, the CAFTA agreement that is with El Salvador with the United States of America is going to be 1 year old. And during this year, we have increased, in 20 percent, all our

exports. And our economy has doubled its size. So there's no doubt that free trade has allowed this to become true.

We have also talked about the Millennium Account, and the project to develop the northern part of El Salvador is going to be a complete success, and very soon, we're going to have the first disbursements made. And we wanted that to be—the project of the development of the northern part of our country to become a success story for the Millennium Account.

We also talked about the TPS with President Bush today. And the President always has a very positive answer for El Salvador. But more importantly, today is the comprehensive immigration reform. And we will have to wait and see what happens between the Executive and the Congress of the United States. We have more than 2 million Salvadorans living here in the United States. The majority are legal citizens; many are already North Americans. And the President has always been very sensitive to this issue of the Salvadorans here, for which I feel very grateful.

*President Bush.* Thank you.

*President Saca Gonzalez.* We talked about regional security and its importance,

and also the combat to drug dealing and the combat to the gangs. And we have found many points of coincidence with the President.

And we also talked with the President about biofuels and the importance of biofuels, and how necessary it is, you know, to develop biofuels in the region so that we need less gas and less oil to have our cars run. And in El Salvador, we're about to pass a new law on biofuels, and it's almost ready. And we want to work hand in hand with President Bush for the development of these biofuels in the region.

And anyway, I always feel so comfortable, you know, sitting down and talking with my good friend every time that I come here. Thank you for receiving me.

*President Bush.* Gracias, señor. Gracias.

*President Saca Gonzalez.* Gracias.

*President Bush.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:51 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Saca Gonzalez spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for John D. Negroponte as Deputy Secretary of State

February 27, 2007

Thank you, Madam Secretary. Madam Secretary, thanks for the introduction. Thanks for the really fine job you're doing.

I'm pleased to be with you today, and I'm really honored to stand with a personal friend and a man I admire a lot, the new Deputy Secretary of State, John Negroponte.

I, too, welcome John's family—all five of them here, as well as his wife Diana. I appreciate all his friends who have shown

up. Thanks for coming to pay honor to this good man.

American diplomacy is really critical to ensuring the safety and the security of our citizens. Terrorist enemies follow an ideology of hatred and death. In the long run, the only way to defeat them is to offer a vision that is hopeful and positive and optimistic. Spreading that vision requires strong leadership here at the State Department, and John Negroponte has the talent and the experience our Nation needs in