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of liberty. Only a few miles from this palace are the graves of 17,000 Americans who fought for freedom in the Pacific. Their lasting legacy and the legacy of the Filipinos who fought with them is a free and democratic Philippine nation.

Today, free nations are tested once again. Once again, we face determined enemies of freedom, the terrorists and their allies. Once again, we are depending on one another in an hour of need. Once again, we are relying on the strength of the great alliance between our two countries. Once again, we will prevail.

Madam President, I thank you for your friendship and counsel, for your courage and perseverance. And I offer this toast to you, to the great nation of the Philippines, and to the lasting friendship between our two peoples.

[*At this point, the President offered a toast.*]

***The President.*** Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. at Malacanang Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

## Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand and an Exchange With Reporters in Bangkok, Thailand

*October 19, 2003*

***President Bush.*** Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for your grand hospitality. Our entire delegation is honored that you have worked so hard to make our stay comfortable and meaningful.

We just had a very good bilateral with our very close friend. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his strong support in the war on terror and remind our fellow citizens that because of his Government and his good work, Mr. Hambali, one of the masterminds of the Bali bombing, has been brought to justice. Mr. Prime Minister, the world is safer because of that. And I want to thank you, and I want to thank you for your support in Iraq.

I told the Prime Minister that this country is willing to grant major non-NATO ally status to Thailand, which is a very important recognition of your friendship and your strong support. As well we discussed the fact that we want to move forward the free trade agreement. We have the intention to begin negotiations on our free trade agreement, which is a very important step in our bilateral relations. And I want to thank you for that.

We also talked about a wide range of issues, including Burma and our deep desire for freedom to take place in Burma. We care deeply about Aung San Suu Kyi and the status of Aung San Suu Kyi, and we would like to see her free. I appreciate the sympathetic hearing I got from the Prime Minister. We share the same goal; the Government assured us of that, and I thank him for that.

All in all, it was very constructive visit, perhaps made more constructive by the fact that the Prime Minister went to university at Sam Houston State in Huntsville, Texas—[*laughter*]—and therefore, we speak the same language. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, sir, for your hospitality.

I thought I'd take a couple of questions.

### *North Korea*

***Q.*** Mr. President, would you be willing to offer North Korea some kind of non-invasion or non-aggression agreement or pact, maybe something short of a treaty, if it would get out of the nuclear weapons business?

***President Bush.*** Well, that's exactly what I'm going to talk to the leader of China about here in a couple of hours, how to move the process forward. I've said as plainly as I can say that we have no intention of invading North Korea. And I've also said as plainly as I can say that we expect North Korea to get rid of her nuclear weapons ambitions. And the progress we're making on this issue is that we've convinced other nations to say the same thing, including China and Japan and South Korea and Russia—and Thailand. The Foreign Minister recently has had a trip there, and briefed us on his discussions with the North Korean Government.

We would like to see the Korean Peninsula without any nuclear weapons. And we will also be willing to discuss with the Chinese and our other partners how to move the process forward. That's precisely what I'm going to do.

Holland [Steve Holland, Reuters].

### *Usama bin Laden Tape/War on Terror*

***Q.*** Sir, bin Laden is threatening new attacks. How serious a threat is this, and will this discourage other countries from stepping forward in Iraq?

***President Bush.*** I think that the bin Laden tape should say to everybody the war on terror goes on, that there's still a danger for free nations and that free nations need to work together more than ever to share intelligence, cut off money, and bring these potential killers or killers to justice. And we've got to find them. And that's one of the discussion points that the Prime Minister and I just had. It's something I'll discuss with other leaders here at APEC. This is still a dangerous world, and that tape just points out exactly what I meant.

David.

### *North Korea*

***Q.*** Mr. President——

***Q.*** Mr. President——

***Q.*** Which one?

***President Bush.*** Neither. [*Laughter*] Both. [*Laughter*] The prettier one first. [*Laughter*]

***Q.*** I'll let you go——

***Q.*** I won't go there, Mr. President. If I could just follow up on your answer on North Korea. You've often said in recent days that you had made the decision on Iraq because you could not leave the security of the American people in the hands of a madman——

***President Bush.*** Yes.

***Q.*** You are now in a position where the CIA says, has long said that North Korea has maybe two weapons. There are some arguments they may now have four or six, while this slow diplomacy has gone on. Would you say that Kim Chong-il now poses as urgent and immediate a threat today as Saddam Hussein did a year ago?

***President Bush.*** I would say that the situation is different between North Korea and Iraq, and that it's this, David, that we tried diplomacy for 12 long years in Iraq, and many Security Council resolutions for Iraq, and the world spoke clearly about Iraq. And Saddam Hussein ignored the world. And therefore, we put a coalition together to deal with Saddam Hussein.

We're making progress on the diplomatic front. I'd like to resolve all issues in a peaceful way, without using our military, and I think we have an opportunity to do so——

***Q.*** Even if they're still building weapons while you do it?

***President Bush.*** Well, we'll find out if they are or not. We—the key thing we're going to do is now, for the first time, have started to speak with not one voice but five voices to convince Mr. Kim Chong-il that he ought to change his way.

And today is—we're furthering the process with my discussions with Mr. Hu Jintao on this very subject. China is now very much engaged in the process. And as you very well know as a student of this issue, that hasn't been the case up until recently. As a matter of fact, the bilateral approach to dealing with North Korea didn't work. We signed an agreement with North Korea prior to our arrival in Washington, DC, and the North Koreans cheated. And so we're trying another approach. And I'm hopeful this will work, and we're making good progress on this approach.

Yes.

***Q.*** Sir, can I just follow on one aspect of that, which is you're making very clear again today that you have no intention of invading North Korea, and you want them to know that. But in your mind, is there a distinction between saying that publicly and putting that down on paper in a non-aggression pact? Is that something you are unwilling to do?

***President Bush.*** I'm going to look at all options. But you know, first of all, it is very important for us to work with our partners on this issue. That's the difference. And the difference is that we've now got four other voices besides ourselves who say the same message to Mr. Kim Chong-il, and that is, ''Disarm.'' And we want to explore these options with our—with China and Japan, South Korea, and Russia. And that's what I intend to do.

***Q.*** [*Inaudible*]—that's an important idea, you may——

***President Bush.*** First of all, what's important is that the burden is on North Korea, not on America. North Korea must get rid

of her nuclear ambitions. She must get rid of her weapons program. That's exactly the point we're trying to make—in a verifiable way, I might add. And we are—we think there's an opportunity to move the process forward, and we're going to discuss it with our partners.

We will not have a treaty, if that's what you're asking. That's off the table. Perhaps there are other ways we can look at—to say exactly what I said publicly on paper, with our partners' consent.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok. In his remarks, he referred to Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy of Burma; President Hu Jintao of China; Minister of Foreign Affairs Surakiat Sathianthai of Thailand; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at the Royal Thai Army Headquarters in Bangkok

*October 19, 2003*

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. General Thammarak, commanders of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, members of the Royal Thai Army, veterans, members of the United States military, distinguished guests and citizens of Thailand, Mrs. Bush and I appreciate your kind welcome to the Royal Thai Army Headquarters. We are honored to be here.

We're honored to be in the Kingdom of Thailand. Today I'm pleased to convey the respect of the American Armed Forces and the good wishes of the American people. I'm grateful to His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen for inviting us to this ancient and beautiful land.

Earlier today I met with Prime Minister Thaksin, and I was proud to reaffirm the great friendship between our nations. We share a belief in democracy and human rights and ethnic and religious tolerance. We also share a willingness to defend those values in times of danger. Our alliance of conviction is also an alliance of courage.

The Thai people have proven your commitment to freedom many times. With us today are members of the Free Thai Movement, who showed such fierce courage during World War II. Other veterans have served in Korea and Vietnam, where the Americans and Thais fought and died together, and during the cold war, when our partnership was so vital to the stability of Asia. All the veterans hold an honored place in a great alliance, and I salute your service.

Today, our nations are challenged once again. We're threatened by ruthless enemies unlike others we have faced. Terrorist groups hide in many countries. They emerge to kill the innocent. They seek weapons to kill on a massive scale. One terrorist camp in the mountains of central Asia can bring horror to innocent people living far away, whether they're in Bali, in Riyadh, or in New York City. One murderous dictator pursuing weapons of mass destruction and cultivating ties to terror could threaten the lives of millions.

We must fight terrorism on many fronts. We must stay on the offensive until the terrorist threat is fully and finally defeated. To win the war on terror, we must hunt a scattered and resourceful enemy in dark corners around the world. We must break up their cells, shut off their sources of money. We must oppose the propaganda of hatred that feeds their cause. In the nations where resentment and terrorism have taken root, we must encourage the alternative of progress and tolerance and freedom that leads to peace.

Nations that choose to fight terror are defending their own safety and securing the peace of all mankind. The United States of America has made its choice. The Kingdom of Thailand has made its choice. We will meet this danger and overcome this evil. Whatever is asked of us, no matter how long it takes, we will push on until our work is done.

Three months after my country was attacked on September the 11th, 2001, Prime Minister Thaksin came to America and offered Thailand's help in the war on terror. Since then, Thailand has committed military