

Statement on Armenian Remembrance Day

April 24, 2005

On Armenian Remembrance Day, we remember the forced exile and mass killings of as many as 1.5 million Armenians during the last days of the Ottoman Empire. This terrible event is what many Armenian people have come to call the “Great Calamity.” I join my fellow Americans and Armenian people around the world in expressing my deepest condolences for this horrible loss of life.

Today, as we commemorate the 90th anniversary of this human tragedy and reflect on the suffering of the Armenian people, we also look toward a promising future for an independent Armenian state. The United States is grateful for Armenia’s contributions to the war on terror and to efforts to build a democratic and peaceful Iraq. We remain committed to supporting the historic reforms Armenia has pursued for over a decade. We call on the Government of Armenia to advance democratic freedoms that will further advance the aspirations of the Armenian people. We remain committed to a lasting and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We also seek a deeper partnership with Armenia that includes security cooperation and is rooted in the shared values of democratic and market economic freedoms.

I applaud individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have sought to examine the historical events of the early 20th century with honesty and sensitivity. The recent analysis by the International Center for Transitional Justice did not provide the final word, yet marked a significant step toward reconciliation and restoration of the spirit of tolerance and cultural richness that has connected the people of the Caucasus and Anatolia for centuries. We look to a future of freedom, peace, and prosperity in Armenia and Turkey and hope that Prime Minister Erdogan’s recent proposal for a joint Turkish-Armenian commission can help advance these processes.

Millions of Americans proudly trace their ancestry to Armenia. Their faith, traditions, and patriotism enrich the cultural, political, and economic life of the United States. I ap-

preciate all individuals who work to promote peace, tolerance, and reconciliation.

On this solemn day of remembrance, I send my best wishes and expressions of solidarity to Armenian people around the world.

Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas

April 25, 2005

President’s Meeting With Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia

Q. What do you expect to get out of this meeting, sir?

The President. Do you like the footpath?

Q. Let’s talk about the meeting.

The President. This is an important relationship—personal relationship with the Crown Prince is important. I look forward to talking with him about a variety of subjects. I’m glad you’re here. Thank you for coming. I hope you’re enjoying this day.

Oil Prices/Energy Legislation

Q. How much progress can you make on oil prices?

The President. I’ll be glad to answer those questions at a later time.

Q. Later today?

The President. No. No, of course I’ll talk about energy. And the Crown Prince understands that it’s very important for there to be a—make sure that the price is reasonable. A high oil price will damage markets, and he knows that. I look forward to talking to him about that. But as well as—you know, we’ll talk about his country’s capacity. It’s an important subject.

One thing is for certain: I need to sign an energy bill. I appreciate the House passing the energy bill, and now it’s time for the Senate to pass the energy bill. The bill is a long time in coming. The Vice President and I suggested they pass a bill in 2001, and nothing happened. Now is the time for something to happen. I’m looking forward to getting back to Washington and continue to talk about energy.

Q. Sir, do you think gas prices can be any lower than it is today?

The President. That depends on the supply and demand. One thing is for certain:

The price of crude is driving the price of gasoline. The price of crude is up because not only is our economy growing, but economies such as India and China's economies are growing.

Here comes my guest. Anyway, nice going; you got me to answer some questions.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:05 a.m. at the Bush Ranch.

Joint Statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States of America

April 25, 2005

April 25, 2005, marks the 60th anniversary of the meeting of Soviet and U.S. troops at the River Elbe.

Our nations will always remember the handshake that made history at the Elbe, which became one of the most vivid symbols that our countries were comrades-in-arms in fighting together against Nazi tyranny, oppression, and aggression. We admire the courage and gallant deeds of the soldiers from the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. We will never forget their sacrifice for our common victory.

The past 60 years have witnessed reconciliation in Europe, the overcoming of the Cold War legacy, the fall of barriers that divided peoples and nations, the growth of prosperity, and the advancement of freedom and democracy.

In the new century, new threats to the security of our countries have arisen, including terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But there are also increased opportunities for building a lasting peace based on law and the common values of freedom and democracy. While Russia and the United States are building a closer partnership, the meeting at the Elbe reminds us of the enormous advantages that we can provide for both our countries and for the rest of the world when we are united in dealing with global challenges and take advantage of the opportunities before us for progress and cooperation.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

April 25, 2005

Sixty years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's founder King Abdulaziz Al Saud held a historic meeting upon a sturdy ship at the Great Bitter Lake in the Suez Canal. In six hours President Bush's predecessor and the Crown Prince's father established a strong personal bond that set the tone for decades of close relations between our two nations.

Today, we renewed our personal friendship and that between our nations. In our meeting we agreed that momentous changes in the world call on us to forge a new relationship between our two countries—a strengthened partnership that builds on our past partnership, meets today's challenges, and embraces the opportunities our nations will face in the next sixty years.

Our friendship begins with the recognition that our nations have proud and very distinct histories.

The United States respects Saudi Arabia as the birthplace of Islam, one of the world's great religions, and as the symbolic center of the Islamic faith as custodian of Islam's two holy places in Makkah and Madina. Saudi Arabia reiterates its call on all those who teach and propagate the Islamic faith to adhere strictly to the Islamic message of peace, moderation, and tolerance and reject that which deviates from those principles. Both countries agree that this message of peace, moderation, and tolerance must extend to those of all faiths and practices. The two nations reaffirm the principles agreed to during the international conference on counterterrorism hosted by the Kingdom in February 2005. These principles were enshrined in the "Riyadh Declaration" which calls for, "fostering values of understanding, tolerance, dialogue, co-existence, and the rapprochement between cultures. . . [and] for fighting any form of thinking that promotes hatred, incites violence, and condones