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transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Singh. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Religious Leaders in New Delhi

March 2, 2006

The President. We have just had a—a very important discussion about the role of religion, not only in India but the role that religion can play in helping the world become a more peaceful place. I want to thank the leaders here around the table. Leaders from different faiths have joined us to share with—their thoughts with me.

You know, one of the things that struck me during the conversation is, in India, is—it's a country that recognizes the importance of religion and welcomes interfaith dialog, understands the importance of faith and understands the importance of people of faith discussing thoughts and views that are—that are deep in their hearts.

And we've had a—just a—you know, India is an amazing country. Just look around the table, and you'll see different religions represented. But everybody around the table also was so proud to be in India. In other words, their nationalism was equally important then, as their religion.

We thank the——

Acharya Srivatsa Goswami. ——here to the world.

The President. Well, that's right. That's right. Thank you. Anyway, I just appreciate you all coming. Thank you for your kind words, and like you, I hope for peace, and like you, I'm proud to be here in India. It's a fantastic country.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:23 p.m. at the Maurya Sheraton and Towers. Participating in the meeting was Acharya Srivatsa Goswami, head of the Sri Caitanya Prema Samsthana. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and India

March 2, 2006

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today expressed satisfaction with the great progress the United States and India have made in advancing our strategic partnership to meet the global challenges of the 21st century. Both our countries are linked by a deep commitment to freedom and democracy; a celebration of national diversity, human creativity and innovation; a quest to expand prosperity and economic opportunity worldwide; and a desire to increase mutual security against the common threats posed by intolerance, terrorism, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The successful transformation of the U.S.-India relationship will have a decisive and positive influence on the future international system as it evolves in this new century.

Reviewing the progress made in deepening the global partnership between the United States and India since their Joint Statement of July 18, 2005, the President and the Prime Minister reaffirm their commitment to expand even further the growing ties between their two countries. Consistent with this objective, the two leaders wish to highlight efforts the United States and India are making together in the following areas, where they have:

For Economic Prosperity and Trade

(1) Agreed to intensify efforts to develop a bilateral business climate supportive of trade and investment by:

1. Welcoming the report of the U.S.-India CEO Forum, agreeing to consider its recommendations aimed at substantially broadening our bilateral economic relations, and directing the Chairs of the Indo-U.S. Economic Dialogue to follow up expeditiously with the CEO Forum;
2. Endorsing the efforts of the U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum to reduce barriers to trade and investment with the goal of doubling bilateral trade in three years;