

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 Action on 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 advance 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 To Be 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.

* White House correction.

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. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Creation of the United States-China Strategic Economic Dialogue

September 20, 2006

I am pleased to welcome the creation of the Strategic Economic Dialogue between the United States and China. My leading economic adviser, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson, will chair the U.S. side of the dialog, with support from Allan Hubbard,

the Director of my National Economic Council. Deborah Lehr will serve as Secretary Paulson's special envoy to the dialog. President Hu and I agree on the importance of maintaining strong and mutually beneficial U.S.-China economic relations and on the need to establish an overarching bilateral economic framework between our two countries. The Strategic Economic Dialogue will help us achieve those objectives.

The economies of the United States and China have been engines of global growth. We must ensure that citizens of both countries benefit equitably from our growing economic relationship and that we work together to address economic challenges and opportunities.

Proclamation 8054—Gold Star Mother's Day, 2006

September 20, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since America's founding, every generation has produced patriots willing to sacrifice for our great Nation. Many of these proud sons and daughters have given everything for our freedom, and America has mourned the loss of every life. On Gold Star Mother's Day, we pay special tribute to the mothers of those lost while defending our country and extending the blessings of liberty to others.

Gold Star Mothers have long borne the hardships of war with dignity and devotion. Through heartbreaking loss and unimaginable grief, they continue to support each other through difficult times, stand up for those wearing the uniform of the United States, and serve their communities in the best traditions of the American spirit. Their strength, compassion, and determination are an inspiration to all and a source of great pride for our Nation.

America lives in freedom because of the sacrifices of America's finest citizens and of the mothers who raised them. In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, "There is nothing adequate which anyone in any place can say to those who are entitled