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else, whether prosecutors or Democrats or even the media. So I'm wondering, why do you think it is so many people in your own party have failed to live up to the standards of the responsibility era?

The President. If any person in any party fails to live up to high standards, they ought to be held to account, Richard. It's important for there to be trust in the Halls of Congress and in the White House and throughout government. People got to trust elected leaders in order for democracy to work to its fullest extent. And I fully expect people to be held to account if there's wrongdoing, just like I expect corporate executives to be held to account for wrongdoing, just like I expect people throughout our society to be held to account for wrongdoing.

People do have to take responsibility for the decisions they make in life. I take responsibility for the decisions I make. I also understand that those of us in positions of responsibility have the duty to bring honor to the offices we hold. People don't have to agree with somebody's opinion—there's all kinds of opinions here—but in order to make this country work and to make democracy succeed, there's got to be high standards, and people must be held to account to achieve those standards.

I thank you for your time. See you on the campaign trail.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:31 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this press conference.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Leonel Fernandez Reyna of the Dominican Republic

October 25, 2006

President Bush. *Bienvenidos a mi amigo,* the President of the Dominican Republic. I'm proud to be with a strong leader who is focused on reform and rule of law and prosperity.

The President informed me that the economy of the Dominican Republic grew by 9 percent last year. And I want to congratulate you, Mr. President.

We talked about how to continue economic growth and vitality. It's in the interests of the United States that the Dominican Republic have a strong economy. We talked about the need for us to help with the multilateral institutions, to work with—for them to work with this Government to help with cash flows and cash demands so that this economy can continue its growth and strength.

We talked about DR–CAFTA and how important this piece of legislation is to the people of the Dominican Republic and to the people of the United States. And I assured the President that we will implement DR–CAFTA as quickly as possible, as soon as possible. And to that end, I had my trade minister, Ambassador Susan Schwab, here to make sure that we both heard the message of the President, that this was a very important piece of legislation and that we have committed—our Government has committed to working with you, Mr. President, to get this done as quickly as possible.

Y por fin, we talked about the need for us to work closely on drug trafficking. The United States of America must continue to work to diminish the demand for drugs, and we are. As well, we want to work with our partners in the hemisphere, particularly the Dominican Republic, to interdict the drugs and to help these countries be able to avoid and fight off the scourge of drugs, because there is a direct correlation between drugs and crime. And the more we can cut down on drug use and drug trafficking and drug supplies, the easier it will be for respective countries to protect their people.

Mr. President, I appreciate very much your presence here. I thank you for your leadership in the hemisphere. I appreciate the advice you have given me on how we can work together to make sure our own neighborhood is secure and peaceful and hopeful. Welcome.

President Fernandez Reyna. I thank you very much, Mr. President. It's a pleasure to be here. And I want to thank President Bush for the warm welcome that he has given me, along with my delegation, here to the Oval Office of the White House.

As the President indicated, we have touched on a number of issues of mutual interest to our two countries. First of all, DR–CAFTA; its implementation, hopefully, will take place very soon. We are now in the final phase. This is a bill now before our own Congress in the Dominican Republic. We are dealing with some minor legal amendments, and our two teams have been working very hard to obtain a speedy implementation of DR–CAFTA. President Bush and we have agreed to the need to accelerate this process to benefit both our countries.

Second, as President Bush indicated, we have also touched on the issues of disbursements by multilateral institutions. These are extremely important in order to help the progress of countries like the Dominican Republic to establish confidence, to maintain the confidence in our countries, and also to help us sustain ability of our economies.

The Dominican Republic has agreements with these multilateral institutions, and we hope that they will be honored soon, with regard to these disbursements. The sooner that they are complied with the better it will be for us.

And third, of course, we have touched on a number of issues such as the issue of drug trafficking, as President Bush mentioned, the issue of crime, the issue of the good relations that we have had for so many years between the United States and the Dominican Republic, the issue of good governance, the issue of respect for human rights, and a number of other things.

It has been a very good meeting. Thank you so much.

President Bush. *Gracias por su tiempo.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Fernandez Reyna spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the Secure Fence Act of 2006

October 26, 2006

Thank you all. Thank you. Please be seated. I'm pleased that you all are here to witness the signature of the Secure Fence Act of 2006. This bill will help protect the American people. This bill will make our borders more secure. It is an important step toward immigration reform.

I want to thank the Members of Congress for their work on this important piece of legislation. I welcome you here to the White House. I'm looking forward to signing this bill.

I appreciate the Vice President joining us today. I thank the Deputy Secretary, Michael Jackson, of the Department of Homeland Security. Rob Portman—he happens to be the Director of the OMB. I want to thank Ralph Basham, who is the Commissioner of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection—David Aguilar is the Chief of the U.S. Border Patrol.

I appreciate the fact that Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist has joined us, as well as House Majority Leader John Boehner. I appreciate them coming in from their respective States as I sign this piece of legislation. I want to thank Congressman Peter King, who's the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee in the House of Representatives. I appreciate you being here, Peter.

Ours is a nation of immigrants. We're also a nation of law. Unfortunately, the United States has not been in complete control of its borders for decades, and therefore, illegal immigration has been on the rise. We have a responsibility to address these challenges. We have a responsibility to enforce our laws. We have a responsibility to secure our borders. We take this responsibility seriously.

Earlier this year, I addressed the Nation from the Oval Office. I laid out our strategy for immigration reform. Part of that strategy begins with securing the border. Since I took office, we have more than doubled funding for border security—from $4.6 billion in 2001 to $10.4 billion this year. We've increased the number of Border Patrol agents from about 9,000 to more than 12,000, and by the end of 2008, we will have doubled