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Statement on Congressional Passage of United States-India Nuclear Energy Cooperation Legislation

December 9, 2006

Congress has agreed upon bipartisan legislation that will strengthen the strategic relationship between America and India and deliver valuable benefits to both nations. I am pleased that our two countries will soon have increased opportunities to work together to meet our energy needs in a manner that does not increase air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, promotes clean development, supports nonproliferation, and advances our trade interests.

I appreciate Congress's support for the U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation initiative and would like to thank Chairman Hyde, Ranking Member Lantos, Chairman Lugar, and Ranking Member Biden for their leadership on this extraordinary legislation. I look forward to signing this bill into law soon.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5682.

Statement on the Situation in Darfur, Sudan

December 10, 2006

I send my greetings to those participating in events around the world protesting the situation in Darfur. It is only fitting that we take the time today to remember the value of every human life and the right of every person in the world to live in peace with dignity and respect.

Our Nation is appalled by the genocide in Darfur, which has led to the spread of fighting and hostility in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic. We call on the Government of the Republic of Sudan and the rebel groups to cease fighting and pursue peace.

We continue to work on establishing a credible and effective peacekeeping force to stop the violence in Darfur. To this end, we are aggressively engaging all stakeholders to implement U.N. Resolution 1706 to transition the African Union Mission in Sudan to a strong international peacekeeping operation. We are urgently seeking to broaden support for the Darfur Peace Agreement and pressuring all sides to implement an immediate cease-fire. We will continue to work with the Congress, the United Nations, the African Union, and the international community to provide aid to those who are suffering. The United States is committed to achieving stability, lasting peace, and the restoration of basic human rights for the people of Darfur.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Senior State Department Officials

December 11, 2006

Thank you all for coming. I just had a briefing with my senior policy advisers here at the State Department. I want to thank you for your hospitality, Madam Secretary.

We talked about a lot of things. We talked about what's taking place on the ground in Iraq, particularly from the perspective of the State Department. I must tell you, there are some fantastic, brave souls who are heading PRTs, Provincial Reconstruction Teams. These are our civilian components on the ground there in Iraq. And we got a briefing from Baghdad, with one of our PRT leaders here in Washington, about the challenges and the tasks to help this Iraqi Government get a country that can sustain and govern and defend itself.

No question in my mind, there are some very brave State Department officials who are engaged in this really important endeavor, and I want to thank them and their families. I appreciate the advice I got from those folks in the field. And that advice is an important part and an important component of putting together a new way forward in Iraq. Like most Americans, this administration wants to succeed in Iraq, because we understand success in Iraq will help protect the United States in the long run.

We also talked about the neighborhood, the countries that surround Iraq and the responsibilities that they have to help this young Iraqi democracy survive. We believe that most of the countries understand that a mainstream society, a society that is a functioning democracy, is in their interests. And it's up to us to help focus their attentions