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to fight Al Qaida. They asked for support from the coalition and the Iraqi Government, and we responded.

Together, we have driven Al Qaida out of strongholds in Anbar. The level of violence is down. Local governments are meeting again. Young Sunnis are joining the police and army. And normal life is returning. The people of Anbar have seen that standing up to the terrorists and extremists leads to a better life. And Anbar has shown that improving security is the first step toward achieving economic progress and political reconciliation.

On my visit, I met with tribal sheiks who have fought with us against Al Qaida and who are now building a better future for their people and for all Iraqis. One Sunni sheik told me, "We have suffered a great deal from terrorism. We strongly support the democracy you have called for. The previous regime [of Saddam Hussein] should not be characterized as a Sunni regime; it was a regime against the Sunnis, Shi'a, and the Kurds."

I also met with national leaders from Iraq's Government: President Talabani and Prime Minister Maliki, Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih, Vice President Abd Al-Mahdi, Vice President Hashimi, and President Barzani of the Kurdish region. These men come from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, but they all understand the importance of succeeding in Anbar. And so they're reaching out to help, with positive steps such as sharing oil revenues with Provincial leaders. I thanked the representatives of Iraq's Government for their efforts to support the bottom-up progress in Anbar. And I told them that the American people expect them to meet their commitments and pass the legislation they've agreed on.

While in Iraq, I also received a good briefing from General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. They gave me an update on our military and political and economic efforts to support our Iraqi partners. They told me about the progress they're seeing across Iraq and their ideas for the way forward. In the next few days, they will come to Washington to give Congress their assessment of conditions on the ground. I urge the Members of Congress to listen to these two well-respected professionals before jumping to any conclusions.

Most importantly, during my visit, I met with our troops serving in Anbar. Every day, these fine men and women show courage under incredibly difficult circumstances. The work they're doing on the sands of Anbar is making us safer in the streets of America. Because of their bravery and sacrifice, our troops in Iraq are denying Al Qaida safe havens from which to plot and plan and carry out attacks against Americans both here and abroad. I know how hard it is for our men and women in uniform to be away from their families. I told them our Nation appreciates their willingness to serve and that the American people stand with them.

Next week, after consulting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, my national security team, Members of Congress from both parties, and Iraqi leaders, I will speak directly to the Nation about the recommendations General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker have presented to me. I will discuss the changes our strategy has brought to Iraq. I will lay out a vision for future involvement in Iraq—one that I believe the American people and their elected leaders of both parties can support. By coming together on the way forward, we will strengthen Iraq's democracy, deal a blow to our enemies, secure interests in the Middle East, and make our Nation safer.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6 p.m. on September 6 at the InterContinental Sydney in Sydney, Australia, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.d.t., on September 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 7 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 14-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's remarks in Sydney, Australia. In his address, the President referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Visit With Wounded Troops and Their Families at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

September 8, 2007

The President. I appreciate the Governor of this beautiful State, Admiral Keating, his

wife, for their hospitality. The Secretary and I have just landed. We've come from Australia; we're on our way to DC. And I decided that it was best to stop and say hello to some of our wounded soldiers and sailors and marines.

Every time I have an opportunity to meet people who have sacrificed on behalf of the security of the country, I'm amazed at their spirit and their resolve. One of the things I look for is to make sure that these troops and their families are getting the best possible treatment. If they've got any complaints, I'm available for them to air them out.

And what I heard was encouraging; that people feel like they're getting the best possible care. And that makes me feel good. I told them, when I was in the room, that I came back from Iraq encouraged by what I saw. No question, there's still hard work to do, but my resolve is as strong as it's ever been. I believe we're doing the right thing there for the security of the country and for the peace of the world.

General David Petraeus will be reporting to the Congress, along with Ambassador Crocker, on Monday and Tuesday. I will then talk about a way forward after their report. I ask the Members of Congress to just sit back and listen to what we all have to say before they reach the conclusions that they're going to reach. But one thing is for certain: Now is the time to do the hard work in order to make sure that we can have a peaceful world; now is the time to deny the radicals and extremists a safe haven; and now is the time to advance democracy in the heart of the Middle East. I believe that's the calling of our time, and I believe we'll succeed. And I know it's necessary we do.

Anyway, thank you all for your hospitality.

Admiral Timothy J. Keating. Yes, sir.

The President. Admiral said he cooked some lunch for us today. I'm looking forward to having it.

Adm. Keating. Caught the fish and then cooked the lunch.

The President. Governor, proud to be with you.

Governor Linda Lingle of Hawaii. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you very much.

The First Lady

Q. Did you change any minds, Mr. President, with your trip?

Q. How is Mrs. Bush?

The President. She's doing great, thank you. I talked to Laura, talked to her twice. I talked to her right before she went in for the surgery, in Australia, and then talked to her twice on the airplane. Her spirits are good. They feel like the surgery was a success. She's now back at the White House. I told her I'm looking forward to having breakfast with her. I told her I'd be home soon. And I'm just grateful that the doctors did a good job, and I thank God for the fact that it came out well.

Q. Is she going to be released by the time you get home, sir?

The President. Yes, she's at the White House now.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. at the Tradewinds Enlisted Club. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Timothy J. Keating, USN, commander, U.S. Pacific Command, and his wife, Wandalee; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Memorandum on Emergency Fund Drawdown To Support Assistance to Conflict Victims in Iraq, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka

September 8, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–31

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Emergency Fund Drawdown to Support Assistance to Conflict Victims in Iraq, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including sections 2 and 4(a)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (the "Act"), as amended (22 U.S.C. 2601 and 2603) and section 301 of title 3, United States Code:

(1) I hereby determine, pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Act, that it is important to the national interest to furnish assistance