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the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:06 a.m., December 26, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation and its attached annex were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 21, and they will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 27. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Message on the Observance of Christmas 2007

December 21, 2007

"But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High . . . his kingdom will never end.' "

Luke 1:30–33

During the Christmas season, our thoughts turn to the source of joy and hope born in a humble manger on a holy night more than 2,000 years ago. Each year, Christians everywhere celebrate this single life that changed the world and continues to change hearts today. The simple and inspiring story of the birth of Jesus fills our souls with gratitude for the many blessings in our lives and promises that God's purpose is justice and His plan is peace.

At this special time of year, we give thanks for Christ's message of love and mercy, and we are reminded of our responsibility to serve. America is blessed to have fine citizens who reach out with a compassionate hand to help brothers and sisters in need. We also remember our brave men and women in uniform who have volunteered to defend us in distant lands. Many of those who have answered the call of duty will spend Christmas far from home and separated from family. We honor their sacrifice, ask God to watch over them and their families, and pray for their safe return.

Christmas is a time to rejoice and remember the birth of Jesus Christ. Laura and I pray your Christmas will be blessed with family and fellowship, and we wish you a day of glad tidings. Merry Christmas.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message Sending Holiday Greetings to Members of the Armed Forces

December 21, 2007

To the Men and Women of the United States Armed Forces

On behalf of a grateful Nation, Laura and I send our best wishes for the holidays.

In this season of giving, we remember our duty to others, and we see that sense of duty fulfilled in the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. Our country owes you a debt of gratitude for your courage and resolve to serve the cause of peace. Americans are proud of your dedicated service, and I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of the greatest force for freedom in the history of the world.

Our Nation is thankful for the many sacrifices you and your families make every day. During the holidays and throughout the coming year, we ask the Almighty to bestow His protection and care on you and your loved ones. We pray for your safety and for liberty, justice, and peace on Earth.

Laura and I wish you a joyful holiday season. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 2007

December 21, 2007

I send greetings to those observing Kwanzaa.