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of the United States naval forces in anti-submarine warfare using mid-frequency active sonar:

I hereby exempt from compliance with the requirements of section 1456(c)(1)(A) of title 16 (section 307(c)(1)(A) of the Coastal Zone Management Act) those elements of the Department of the Navy's anti-submarine warfare training during Southern California Operating Area Composite Training Unit Exercises (COMPTUEX) and Joint Task Force Exercises (JTFEX) involving the use of mid-frequency active sonar. These exercises are more fully described in the Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment prepared for the Commander, United States Pacific Fleet, dated February 2007.

On January 3, 2008, as modified on January 10, 2008, the United States District Court for the Central District of California determined that the Navy's use of mid-frequency active sonar was not in compliance with section 1456(c)(1)(A), and issued an order that is appealable under section 1291 or 1292 of title 28, United States Code. On January 11, 2008, the Secretary of Commerce made a written request that the Navy be exempted from compliance with section 1456(c)(1)(A) in its use of mid-frequency active sonar during COMPTUEX and JTFEX. As part of that request, the Secretary of Commerce certified that mediation under section 1456(h) is not likely to result in the Navy's compliance with section 1456(c)(1)(A).

I hereby determine that the COMPTUEX and JTFEX, including the use of mid-frequency active sonar in these exercises, are in the paramount interest of the United States. Compliance with section 1456(c)(1)(A) would undermine the Navy's ability to conduct realistic training exercises that are necessary to ensure the combat effectiveness of carrier and expeditionary strike groups. This exemption will enable the Navy to train effectively and to certify carrier and expeditionary strike groups for deployment in support of world-wide operational and combat activities, which are essential to national security.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt

January 16, 2008

President Mubarak. I'd like to welcome President Bush here in Egypt and, particularly, in Sharm el-Sheikh City. It is the City of Peace.

We briefed Mr. Bush—he briefed us on the outcome of his visits in the region, and we had very important consultations, which dealt with the security situation now and bilateral and mutual efforts for the sake of peace, security, and stability in the Middle East.

I emphasized through our consultations the Egyptian situation, underscoring and supporting peace and our aspirations that Mr. Bush follows up the negotiations between both the Israeli and Palestinian sides, and I also said that I wish to reach a peace agreement before the end of his term. I emphasized that the Palestinian question, of course, is the core of problems and conflict in the Middle East, and it is the entry to contain the crises and tension in the region and the best means to face what's going on in the world and our region—I mean by that, the escalation of violence, extremism, and terrorism.

I also underscored the strategic importance we focus on here in Egypt, that the Gulf—its peoples, sisterly peoples and states, they are part and parcel of the national security of Egypt, the security of the Middle East, and the world. The Egyptian-American relations actually have been very important, and this importance has been getting more important. And this importance addressed the interests of both people in all the region and issues in the Middle East.

Our consultations today showed that we believe and understand the mutual interests of both sides in continuing our dialog and consultations—and I mean by that, strategic consultations—for the sake of the peace, security, and stability of the Middle East and the development of its states and the prosperity of its people. I also emphasized that we in Egypt, we are keen on supporting peace efforts; that we're ready, hand in hand with the United States of America and the

Quartet and all other regional and international stakeholders of parties, for the sake of comprehensive and just peace, to put an end to this Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, finally, to open new horizons for the Middle East, for a more peaceful and security future—more justice and security in the region.

I reiterate our welcome words for Mr. Bush, and I hope that his efforts in the sake of peace would reach a success. And I'll give you the floor, sir.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you, sir. It's a pleasure to be back in Egypt. This is such a beautiful sight, Mr. President. Thank you for hosting my visit here. As you mentioned, I've been on a long trip, and I can't think of a better place to end it than right here with you in this beautiful setting.

President Mubarak. But needs much more days.

President Bush. Yes. He wants me back, okay. [*Laughter*] He's extended an invitation, and thank you for that, sir.

It's an important stop for me because the United States has a longstanding friendship with Egypt. It's important for the people of Egypt to understand, our Nation respects you, respects your history, respects your traditions, and respects your culture. Our friendship is strong. It's a cornerstone of—one of the main cornerstones of our policy in this region, and it's based on our shared commitment to peace, security, and prosperity.

I appreciate the opportunity, Mr. President, to give you an update on my trip. And I appreciate the advice you've given me. You've seen a lot in your years as President. You've got a great deal of experience, and I appreciate your feeling comfortable in sharing that experience once again with me.

I really appreciate Egypt's support in the war on terror. I appreciate the fact that you've given peacekeepers for Sudan. I did brief you on my talks in Israel and with the Palestinians, and they were positive talks. And I said, I'm optimistic an agreement can be reached. And the reason I am is because I believe the leadership in Israel and the leadership of the Palestinians is committed to a two-state solution. And I know nations in the neighborhood are willing to help, particularly yourself. And I appreciate your strong, constructive support for the process.

And I told the President, I'm going to stay—there's a wonder whether or not the American President, when he says something, whether he actually means it. When I say, "I'm coming back to stay engaged," I mean it. And when I say, "I'm optimistic we can get a deal done," I mean what I'm saying. And so I appreciate the chance to talk.

We also talked about Lebanon, and we agree it's important for nations in this region to support Prime Minister Siniora. It's important to encourage the holding of immediate and unconditional Presidential elections according to the Lebanese Constitution and to make it clear to Syria, Iran, and their allies, they must end their interference and efforts to undermine the process.

We talked—and by the way, when it came to the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, I want to thank you for your support of Annapolis. It was important that you were there. As a matter of fact, you didn't hesitate, because you knew that both those parties had to have supportive people in the region. And I thank you very much for that.

We spent time on Iraq. The President asked me how I thought things were going there. The decision to send more troops is working. Violence is down. Secretary Rice came back from Iraq yesterday and briefed me that she was able to see life returning back to the streets, where moms are out with their children. Normal life is coming back, and political life is moving.

Mr. President, I'm sure you followed the fact that the Council of Representatives passed the deBa'athification law as part of an important reconciliation package. The Government isn't perfect, but nevertheless, progress is being made. And I assured you, Mr. President—I want to share this with the press corps—that the United States will continue to help the Iraqi people secure their democracy.

I also talked about Egypt's role in the world. Egypt is an important nation that sends a clear signal. People watch Egypt. I appreciate very much the long and proud tradition that you've had for a vibrant civil society. I appreciate the fact that women play

an important role in your society, Mr. President. I do so because not only am I'm a proud father of two young professional women; I also know how important it is for any vibrant society to have women involved in constructive and powerful ways. And I appreciate the example that your nation is setting.

Progress toward greater political openness is being led by the Egyptians themselves, by pioneering journalists—some of whom even may be here—bloggers or judges insisting on independence or other strong civic and religious leaders who love their country and are determined to build a democratic future.

Because of the predominate role you play and because I strongly believe that Egypt can play a role in the freedom and justice movement—you and I have discussed the issue; you have taken steps toward economic openness—and I discussed that with your Prime Minister—and democratic reform. And my hope is that the Egyptian Government will build on these important steps and give the people of this proud nation a greater voice in your future. I think it will lead to peace, and I think it will lead to justice.

Our friendship with Egypt is deep and broad. Egypt will continue to be a vital strategic partner of the United States. We will work together to build a safer and more peaceful world. And, Mr. President, I thank your leadership on the issue of peace and security.

I've had a great trip. I've been impressed by the warmth and the energy of the people I have met. This is a dynamic part of the world that is seeing significant changes. I wish my fellow citizens would be able to come and see firsthand the vibrancy and excitement in the Middle East. People here are working to embrace the opportunities of a modern global economy and, in doing so, are not abandoning their traditions, their cultures, or their faith.

This isn't easy work, as we head into the 21st century, and it's going to require social, economic, and political reform. And it takes time for people to resolve the challenges in their respective societies—same in my country. But I'm absolutely confident the people of the Middle East are working hard to build a society based upon justice. And I've assured them that as they make the journey, the United States will be a steady friend and partner.

Thank you for your time. God bless.

President Mubarak. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. in the Royal Suite Garden at the Four Seasons Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; and Prime Minister Ahmed Mohamed Nazif of Egypt. President Mubarak spoke partly in Arabic, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Proclamation 8216—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2008

January 16, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., changed our Nation forever through his leadership, service, and clarity of vision. On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, we honor the lasting legacy of this great American, remember the ideals for which he fought, and recommit ourselves to ensuring that our country's promise extends to all Americans across this great land.

In the brief time Dr. King walked upon this earth, he devoted his life to strengthening the content of the American character and called on our Nation to live up to its founding principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all its citizens. Dr. King's faith in the Almighty gave him the courage to confront discrimination and segregation, and he preached that all the powers of evil are ultimately no match for even one individual armed with eternal truths. Through his determination, spirit, and resolve, Dr. King helped lift souls and lead one of the greatest movements for equality and freedom in history.

Our Nation has made progress toward realizing Dr. King's dream, yet the work to achieve liberty and justice for all is never-ending. In July of 2006, I was honored to sign the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006,"