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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,"

to renew the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and reaffirm our commitment to securing the voting rights of all Americans. My Administration will continue to protect the rights won through the sacrifice of Dr. King and other civil rights leaders, and our country will never rest until equality is real, opportunity is universal, and all citizens are empowered to realize their dreams.

As we observe Dr. King's birthday, I encourage all Americans to celebrate his memory by performing acts of kindness through service to others. Let us live out Dr. King's teachings as we continue to work for the day when the dignity and humanity of every person is respected.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 21, 2008, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs and activities in honor of Dr. King's life and legacy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, 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, 8:51 a.m., January 18, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

January 16, 2008

Dear _____ :

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114)(the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2008, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Joseph R. Biden, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Robert C. Byrd, chairman, and Thad Cochran, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Tom Lantos, chairman, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; and David R. Obey, chairman, and Jerry Lewis, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Special Envoy for Sudan Richard S. Williamson

January 17, 2008

The President. I've just had an extensive visit with Madam Secretary and members of my national security team, Rich Williamson, who is the Presidential Envoy—Special Envoy to Sudan.

We talked about our common commitment and the commitment of this Government to help the suffering of citizens in Sudan who, you know, suffer deprivation, rape. My administration called this a genocide. Once you label it genocide, you obviously have to do something about it.

Our discussion centered upon our mutual desire to develop a strategy that will help the United Nations become more effective. The United Nations considers the Darfur issue a central issue, and it's on its agenda. And we agree. The United States can help what has been a process, frankly, that has unfolded a little too slow for our liking. And we can help.

And secondly, we want to make sure that the peace agreement negotiated through this administration by Ambassador Danforth, between the north and south, holds. So Rich is going to report back to me quickly. You know, I plan to accelerate our efforts.

You know, America is probably wondering why, why do you care? And one reason we care about the suffering in Sudan is because we care about the human condition all across