

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Editor's Note: The President was in Zagreb, Croatia, on April 4, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, April 4, 2008

The President's Radio Address

March 29, 2008

Good morning. It's not every day that Americans look forward to hearing from the Internal Revenue Service, but over the past few weeks, many Americans have received a letter from the IRS with some good news. The letters explain that millions of individuals and families will soon be receiving tax rebates, thanks to the economic growth package that Congress passed and I signed into law last month.

Americans who are eligible for a rebate will get it automatically by simply filing their taxes. If you are not a tax filer, you should visit your local IRS office to fill out the necessary paperwork, so you can get your rebate on time.

The growth package also contains incentives for businesses to invest in new equipment this year. On Wednesday, I visited a printing company in Virginia that has decided to use these incentives to purchase new software. As more businesses begin taking advantage of these incentives, investment will pick up and so will job creation. And together with the individual tax rebates, these incentives will help give our economy a shot in the arm.

For many families, the greatest concern with the economy is the downturn in the housing market. My administration has taken action to help responsible homeowners keep their homes. In October, we helped bring together a private sector group called the HOPE NOW Alliance. HOPE NOW has helped streamline the process for refinancing and modifying mortgages, and it runs a national hotline to connect struggling homeowners with mortgage counselors.

On Friday, I visited an impressive mortgage counseling center in New Jersey. At the center, I met with homeowners who have been able to get help, thanks to HOPE NOW. One of them is Danny Cerchiaro.

Danny owns a home in New Jersey that also serves as a studio for his movie production company. When Danny and his wife learned that their adjustable-rate mortgage was resetting to a higher rate this past summer, they became concerned about their financial security. So Danny called HOPE NOW for help. Less than 2 months later, he was able to get a more affordable fixed-rate mortgage. And today, Danny calls the mortgage counselor who helped him, quote, "the magic lady."

Theresa Torres from Kansas City is another homeowner who has been helped. Theresa called HOPE NOW after she and her husband fell behind on their mortgage payments in December. A mortgage counselor helped Theresa modify her mortgage. Today, she no longer worries about losing her home.

There are hundreds of thousands of homeowners like Theresa and Danny who could benefit from calling HOPE NOW. If you're a homeowner struggling with your mortgage, please take the first step toward getting help by calling the hotline at 888-995-H-O-P-E. That's 888-995-H-O-P-E.

HOPE NOW can help homeowners find the right solution for them. One solution for some homeowners is a new program we launched at the Federal Housing Administration called FHASecure. This program has given the FHA greater flexibility to offer struggling homeowners with otherwise good credit histories a chance to refinance. So far, this program has helped more than 130,000 families refinance their mortgages, and by the end of the year, we expect this program to have reached nearly 300,000 homeowners in all.

This is a good start, and my administration is committed to building on it. So we're exploring ways this program can help more qualified home buyers. The problems in the housing market are complicated, and there is no easy solution. But by supporting responsible homeowners with wise policies, we'll help them weather a difficult period, we will

help get our economy back on track, and we will ensure America remains the most prosperous nation in the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:05 a.m. on March 28 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 28 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Departure for Kiev, Ukraine

March 31, 2008

Good morning. Laura and I are on our way to a very important NATO summit, and Members of the United States Congress are on their way back to Washington. And they have a lot of work to do.

Congress needs to pass FISA reform. Our intelligence professionals are waiting on the Congress to give them the tools they need to monitor terrorist communications. Congress also needs to provide liability protection to companies that may have helped save lives after September the 11th, 2001.

Congress needs to pass legislation to modernize the Federal Housing Administration. Struggling homeowners are waiting on Congress to act, so that the FHA can help more Americans refinance their mortgages and stay in their homes.

Congress needs to act urgently to approve the Colombian free trade agreement. A courageous ally in South America is waiting on Congress to approve an agreement that will strengthen our national security. American businesses, workers, and farmers are waiting on Congress to level the playing field.

These are all vital priorities. And I ask members of both parties to get these important pieces of legislation to my desk as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:56 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on the Resignation of Alphonso R. Jackson as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

March 31, 2008

Today Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso Jackson announced his decision to leave the Department after 7 years of dedicated service. I have known Alphonso Jackson for many years, and I have known him to be a strong leader and a good man. I have accepted his resignation with regret.

Secretary Jackson is a great American success story. The youngest of 12 children—his father was a foundry worker, and his mother was a nurse midwife—Alphonso has always understood the value of hard work and equal opportunity for all Americans.

For more than three decades, he has worked to help more Americans become homeowners and strengthen communities throughout our Nation. While leading the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Alphonso made significant progress in transforming public housing, revitalizing and modernizing the Federal Housing Administration, increasing affordable housing, rebuilding the gulf coast, decreasing homelessness, and increasing minority homeownership.

Laura and I treasure our strong friendship with Secretary Jackson, his wife, Marcia, their daughters, Annette and Lesley, and their granddaughter, Lauren. We wish them all the best.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on North Atlantic Treaty Organization Enlargement

March 28, 2008

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 3(2)(E)(i) of the Resolution of Ratification to the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic adopted on April 30, 1998, I am pleased to submit the enclosed report on the Future Enlargement of NATO.

In doing so, I note with appreciation the continued and strong bipartisan support that the Congress has shown on the issue of NATO's next round of enlargement.

The report provides the following information for each of the three current NATO aspirants:

- (I) An evaluation of how each country will further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area;
- (II) An evaluation of the eligibility of each country for membership based on the principles and criteria identified by NATO and the United States, including the military readiness of each country;
- (III) An explanation of how an invitation to each country would affect the national security interests of the United States;
- (IV) An up-to-date United States Government analysis of the common-funded military requirements and costs associated with integrating each country into NATO and an analysis of the shares of those costs to be borne by NATO members, including the United States; and
- (V) A preliminary analysis of the implications for the United States defense budget and other United States budgets of integrating each country into NATO.

The report is classified due to the nature of the information it contains assessing aspirants' capabilities and contributions.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Robert C. Byrd, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl Levin, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; David R. Obey, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; Ike Skelton, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and Howard L. Berman, chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 1.

The President's News Conference With President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine in Kiev

April 1, 2008

President Yushchenko. Dear Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: This is a great honor for Ukraine and Ukrainian Government to welcome the delegation of—chaired by the U.S. President. We just had one-on-one negotiations and expanded negotiations, and we can make general assessment of our talks. We are very pleased with the frankness and the atmosphere that the talks were carried out in.

And they were about the positions of our bilateral relations, the visit of His Excellency President Bush—is very—[inaudible]—documents that were signed. And we also touched upon the issues of the international politics and regional politics. I also want to say that one of the major issues that a lot of attention was paid by us is Ukraine's joining the NATO Membership Action Plan.

And once again, I wanted to prove to Mr. President and the American delegation that when we're speaking about the MAP, we mean political and security essence. The political essence of it is that this country, when we are speaking about the 20th century, has many times announced its independence, but many times this independence failed. For the last 80 years, Ukraine has declared its independence six times, and five times it failed. It failed probably because there were no international signatures—honor our sovereignty. And very often, Ukraine looked like a diversified country, a parted country in an international community. And we are speaking here about the system of political decisions that fixed it right, and on the other hand, we are speaking about the security context.

In my opinion, there are no alternatives for the—against the idea of collective security. And I believe that collective responsibility for security policy, or defense policy, if you may, is the best response to the challenges that currently exist in this society, that exist in the system of international coordination.

And we received full-fledged support from the U.S.A. in Ukraine's plan to join the MAP.

And in the course of the Bucharest summit, I'm sure that we will receive a positive signal in Bucharest. And that's the spirit that we're going there with. And we're sure that it will be also an advantage for those countries who are only about to determine their way there. And it was very important for us to have the roadmap signed. It will determine, actually, our applicable action plan.

This complex document determines the priorities of our cooperation in many sectors, starting from political dialog, space exploration, nuclear policy, and ending with ecological and environmental issues.

During Mr. President's visit, we signed a very important agreement, which is a trade and investment framework agreement. It lays the necessary foundation for—to start negotiations on the free trade area between our countries. And in my opinion, it's also—not less important is the framework agreement on research and use of space in peaceful manner. It opens new prospects for our relations. Still, the relations has already had good practices.

And we also touched upon the energy issues and diversification of energy supplies. We paid attention to the energy summit that will take place in Kiev on the 22–23 of May, on the issues regarding Odessa-Brody EU pipeline project, in the concept of energy security, and other issues that will be considered in the course of the summit.

We also spoke about the domestic political situation in Ukraine. And I would like to thank very much to Mr. President for this very fruitful and dynamic dialog and for that open and trustful atmosphere that was during our dialog. I thank you very much indeed. I really appreciate it.

President Bush. *Dobryi den.* Thank you all very much. I am thrilled to be here, as is my wife. And thank you for your gracious hospitality, Mr. President.

I am proud to be sitting next to a leader who has strong convictions and a lot of courage. We come with a message for the people of Ukraine: Your sovereign nation has a friend and a solid partner in the United States.

Our nations have built our friendship on the love of liberty. Our people believe that freedom is the gift of an Almighty to every

man, woman, and child. And President Yushchenko and I understand that democracies are the best partners for peace and security in every part of the world. So we spent a lot of time talking about NATO.

First, I do want to remind people that Ukraine and the NATO alliance have built a strong partnership. Ukraine is the only non-NATO nation supporting every NATO mission. In Afghanistan and Iraq, Ukrainian troops are helping to support young democracies. In Kosovo, Ukrainians are—help keep the peace.

Ukraine now seeks to deepen its cooperation with the NATO alliance through a Membership Action Plan. Your nation has made a bold decision, and the United States strongly supports your request. In Bucharest this week, I will continue to make America's position clear: We support MAP for Ukraine and Georgia. Helping Ukraine move toward NATO membership is in the interest of every member in the alliance and will help advance security and freedom in this region and around the world.

We also share more than security interests; we share democratic values. Ukraine has demonstrated its commitment to democracy and free markets. You've held three elections since the Orange Revolution. Your commitment to open markets has allowed your economy to grow and earned your nation the opportunity to join the World Trade Organization.

I know you're proud of these accomplishments, and you should be, Mr. President, and so should the people of Ukraine.

We're working together to help the Ukraine—Ukrainians build a better life. You're on the path to reform, and you can count on our continued support. We work together to fight corruption and support civil society groups and strengthen institutions of a free and prosperous economy. And as you mentioned, Mr. President, we're expanding our economic partnership through a trade and investment cooperation agreement.

And so, Mr. President, we have a deep relationship, an important relationship. And I want to thank you for your friendship. Appreciate what you've done to advance the cause of freedom. And I look forward to continuing to work with you during my time as President

to make sure our relationship endures for the years to come.

President Yushchenko. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

***North Atlantic Treaty Organization/
Missile Defense System***

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Do you think that Russia is applying undue pressure and threats to accomplish its goals at NATO on missile defense and stopping the Membership Action Plans of Ukraine and Georgia?

And President Yushchenko, what do you think of Moscow's tactics?

President Bush. Just because there was a bunch of, you know, Soviet-era flags in the street yesterday doesn't—you shouldn't read anything into that. I—look, this is an interesting debate that's taking place. And it's—you know, as every nation has told me, Russia will not have a veto over what happens at Bucharest, and I take their word for it. And that's the right policy to have.

I'm going to work as hard as I can to see to it that Ukraine and Georgia are accepted into MAP. I think it's in our interests as NATO members, and I think it's in Ukrainian and Georgian interests as well.

And on missile defense, we'll see. I've made it abundantly clear to the—President Putin that the missile defense system is not aimed at defending against Russia. After all, Russia could easily overwhelm the missile defense systems that we have in—that we've envisioned. These systems are aimed at a nation out of the Middle East, for example, that could launch an attack against Europe and—just like our systems out in the Far East are aimed at helping protect ourselves from single- or dual-launch regimes.

So obviously we've got a lot of work to do to allay suspicions and old fears, but I believe we're making pretty good progress along those lines.

President Yushchenko. When we're speaking about Ukrainian politics of joining the MAP and NATO membership, I would like to mention a couple basic things. First, this is not a policy against somebody. We are taking care of our national interest.

Taking a look at our history, it's very rich in many tragedies for Ukrainian state that

only the system of collective defense and security—international guarantees of the political sovereignty for Ukraine and territorial integrity will give the full response to the internal question in Ukraine. And I'm sure that for any Ukrainian who takes care of the future for Ukraine, a stable future for Ukraine, the issue of joining the MAP is probably the most high-quality response to all the basic and fundamental interests of Ukraine.

Secondly, I would like the debates that are now being carried out in Europe and in the world regarding Ukraine's prospects of joining the MAP and then after, NATO—form any new obstacle. I'm sure that we are going—we're taking the right track, and we are acting within the framework of our national sovereignty. Our nation is determined, and it corresponds to our political reasonability for the security of the state.

I would like the basic and fundamental principle of work of the alliance—I mean, the open door policy would be replaced by the veto right by the country which is not even a member of the alliance. I'm sure that we're witnessing a very hot and overheated emotional discussion where there are few rules or even sometimes very little respect. But at the end of the day, the wisdom should win.

And I want to firmly state that I'm only governed by a single issue. I want to bring calmness, stability, and security stability, in particular, to this state. We want to be speaking about the Ukrainian presence in the world. We want to speak about the internal country. That's why only through these motives shall we want to have that dialog, the talks.

And what we have in our society—I mean, the part of the political forces who do not share this opinion—I think that this is all natural, because it's quite natural that today, like, hundreds—some hundreds of people and red flags were in the square. This is a remarkable because the Ukrainian famine was built under the same flags as the Ukrainian oppression. These were the flags that caused totalitarianism and sufferings that caused many deaths of millions of people. And I'm sure that the Ukrainian Communist Party may also appear one day in Ukraine that will be standing under the flags of the

nation. But apparently we still need to have another Moses to bring people over the desert for 40 years, for those who lost national interest and forgot about it and continue living in the past. I don't want this personality, in person, and I just want to show my vision and the ideology.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/ Ukraine

Q. The question to President Bush—were you able to persuade France and Germany to give positive answer on the Ukrainian issue, and how your visit is remarkable to deciding—having that decision?

President Bush. Thank you very much. We have been working with all nations in NATO for a positive outcome, because I strongly believe NATO membership is in—for Ukraine and Georgia is in the interest of our organization. And so I have personally talked to quite a few leaders. Secretary Rice has been talking to her counterparts. Mr. Hadley has been talking to his counterparts. And there's a lot of discussions going on. And I wouldn't prejudge the outcome yet. The vote will be taken in Bucharest.

And my stop here is—should be a clear signal to everybody that I mean what I say, and that is, I mean that it's in our interest for Ukraine to join. I mean, that's—and so therefore, one should—but you ought to take more than my stop—more from my stop than just a—trying to send a signal on NATO. I firmly—well, first of all, I was impressed, like most Americans, by the Orange Revolution. You probably don't know this, but a lot of Americans were really, really touched and pleased to see what took place here.

And I told the President that Ukraine is—you know, has caught the imagination of a lot of our fellow citizens over the last decade or so, and that you'll have good friends. The key, of course, is to have government that's open, government that's transparent, government that's noncorrupt, government that actually listens to the voices of the people as it makes laws, which is what's happening.

But, no, this is a good trip, and I'm really thrilled to be here. As the President said, "It took you too long to get here," and I admit it. But nevertheless, better late than never,

as they say. And I'm thrilled to be here, and I want to thank you for your hospitality.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/ Missile Defense System

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. How confident are you of resolving your differences over the missile shield with President Putin during your talks in Sochi? And also, sir, there was a growing impression that you are looking, perhaps, at a tradeoff in which the U.S. would soften its push for Membership Action Plans in NATO for Ukraine and Georgia if Russia acquiesces on missile defense. Could you please address that as well?

President Bush. Yes, I'll be glad to address it. That is a misperception. I strongly believe that Ukraine and Georgia should be given MAP, and there's no tradeoffs, period. As a matter of fact, I told that to President Putin on my phone call with him recently. I said: "You just got to know, I'm headed to Bucharest with the idea in mind of getting MAP for Ukraine and Georgia. And you shouldn't fear that, Mr. President. I mean, after all, NATO is a organization that's peaceful, or NATO is an organization that helps democracies flourish. Democracies are good things to have on your border."

And on the second point, on missile defense, it's in his interests that we participate and share information. After all, a missile from the Middle East can fly north just as easily as it could fly west. And the capacity to be able to share information and share technology to be able to deal with these threats is important for a lot of countries, including Russia.

So, yes, there's all kinds of rumors about things, but thank you for asking and giving me a chance to clarify. My position is absolutely solid. My position is absolutely solid. Ukraine and Georgia should be given MAP. Thank you.

Missile Defense System/Russia

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*what are the chances, in your opinion, of achieving an agreement at Sochi on missile defense?

President Bush. On Sochi, I don't know, but the chances are—advancing my logic is good, since I'll be there talking about it. And

we'll see whether or not there's an agreement. But obviously, we've got work to do to convince the President and people around him that the missile defense system is not aimed at Russia. In other words, it's viewed as an anti-Russian device. Well, it's not, and therefore, it requires a lot of time, a lot of discussion. That's what Condi Rice and Bob Gates spent time doing when they were there in Russia, and that is to defuse any notions that this is aiming something at somebody in Europe. This is all aiming to protect people in Europe.

Yes, I mean, the truth of the matter is, the Russian system could overwhelm the missile defense systems we have envisioned. I mean, these systems are designed to deal with, you know, limited launch capabilities. And they've got multiple launch capabilities. And so it's just—it requires a lot of work. We're dealing with a lot of history and a lot of suspicion throughout governments. And so the President and I will try to work through these for our common good. And I'm hopeful we can have some breakthroughs. We'll see.

The other thing is, is that this will be my last chance to visit with him face-to-face as, you know—and I've worked with him for 8 years. We've had a very interesting relationship. I like him. He's a person that has been a strong leader for Russia. And my view all along has been that it's in our interest—our interests, Ukrainian interests, European interests—to be able to have a working relationship with Russia. And I've had that. And this will be a chance to say, "I appreciate being able to work together," and to be able to try to find some common interests in the waning days of his Presidency.

Ukraine/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. The question to President Yushchenko—please, Mr. President, say, if the positive decision is not taken in Bucharest on Ukraine, what are the next steps of Ukraine then?

President Yushchenko. If not, the—I'm sure that we will win because the arguments that were just mentioned by Mr. President and the positions that Ukraine is standing with, within the framework of the international debate on this issue—we are every

day approaching to the positive final result. This is a colossal international work, and I would like to thank you all—in your presence, I would like to thank President Bush for the work that's been done and that will be done in both public and nonpublic way.

And we fully understand the value of the issue and its importance. Of course, we still have a lot of effort forward to receive a positive answer. I have very good belief that the position of our friends in the EU will play a very important role for tomorrow's decision. And I hope that we will be able to convince those states that still have an opportunity—that will have an opportunity to get more information about it and eliminate all the doubts.

I—frankly speaking, I don't see any other way for Ukraine, no other alternative maybe—emotionally, I would like to say that for the nation, for the political forces, should be more devoted to this way. And the issue of whether Ukraine joins or not—the MAP—is not the complete target, the final target that we have in the Ukrainian society. And I'm sure that in order to avoid speculations on an international level, when somebody refers to the fact that the Ukrainian nation has not decided yet—I'm sorry, we have decided already. We're not speaking about joining NATO. We are only speaking about MAP.

Why Ukraine should be deprived of that sovereign right is—there is a principle of open doors, which is the basic principle for NATO. Why can't we join MAP, and then let's have a meeting in a year or 2, when we explain to the nation that—what the NATO mission is and what the collective security mission is and then how important is—a response for Ukraine it is and why there is no alternative answer for us. If any politician is troubled about this nation and is worried about this future, I am sure that the Ukrainian nation is very wise, and it will make positive decision in the course of the referendum that we going to have regarding Ukraine to join NATO.

I recall when, 3 years ago, we started this discussion, I think, from 17 percent of those who are for and who supported the alliance integration—a year ago, we were supported by 33 percent. During the last live debates, we've seen the analytics that raised up to 40

percent. And we haven't started our work yet—I mean, the profound work. So this is the—quite a situation. I mean, the attention to this issue in the parliament for the last 2 months just made that big progress, and the nation started knowing better what NATO is and what its concept is. So I think everything will be fine.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11 a.m. in the House of Chimaeras at the Presidential Secretariat. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. President Yushchenko and some reporters spoke in Ukrainian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine in Kiev

April 1, 2008

Madam Prime Minister, Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests, thank you for your warm welcome. Laura and I are honored to stand with you on Ukrainian soil, and we bring the greetings of the American people, or as you would say, "*Vitayu vas.*"

The people of Ukraine have made great contributions to the history of human freedom. During World War II, Ukrainian soldiers helped defeat the armies of fascism and end the deadliest conflict in history. And at the end of the cold war, Ukrainians formed an independent nation and declared your desire to live in freedom and peace.

In 2004, Ukrainians inspired the world with the Orange Revolution, using peaceful demonstrations to protect your right to choose your leaders. Today, Ukrainians are showing courage in helping to advance freedom in many parts of the world. You're helping to train security forces in Iraq, supporting a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan. Ukrainians are part of the U.N. mission in Kosovo. Last month in Kosovo, a Ukrainian police officer gave his life and many others were wounded helping to defend the ideals of freedom.

Ukraine is contributing to every mission of the NATO alliance and honoring the ideals that unite the transatlantic community. This

week, Ukraine seeks to strengthen its transatlantic ties through a NATO Membership Action Plan. The United States strongly supports your request. We are proud to stand with you in Bucharest and beyond.

Mr. President, our two nations share a common vision for the future. We seek to advance the cause of freedom and help all peoples of Europe live together in security and peace. With great confidence in that future, I offer a toast to you, to your gracious wife, and to a free and sovereign people of Ukraine.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. at the Presidential Secretariat. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Yatseniuk Arseniy Petrovych of Ukraine; and Kateryna Mykhailivna Yushchenko, wife of President Yushchenko. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Yushchenko.

Remarks Following a Tour of School 57 in Kiev

April 1, 2008

Thank you all very much for letting Laura and me come by your school. And thank you all for coming. You did an excellent job. And we love the Peace Corps. They're great, aren't they? Yes.

Listen, Laura and I are very impressed by your country. It's exciting to be in a place that has come through a very difficult period and now heading toward freedom. And the future of your country is going to depend on you. And it's very important for you to be involved with the future of your country.

And so how do you do that? Well, one, you demand to make sure that your Government is—doesn't have corruption; that you insist that the Government respond to the will of the people, not to the whims of a few. People will say, oh, your voice doesn't matter. It does matter.

The other thing is, make sure you get—you know, keep your education going and then contribute to your society. And you can do it all kinds of ways. You can be a teacher;

you can be a doctor; you can be a small-business owner. You can contribute to the future of your country by just being a good citizen.

So we're very excited for you, and we're excited about your future. And we wish you all the very best. Thank you for your gracious hospitality. Thank you for letting us come by your beautiful school. And may God bless you, and wish you all the very best.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:56 p.m.

Proclamation 8229—Cancer Control Month, 2008

April 1, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Cancer Control Month, we honor cancer victims and survivors, raise awareness of the impact cancer has on our citizens, and underscore our commitment to battling this deadly disease.

Cancer is the second-leading cause of death in the United States, and we remain committed to making the medical advances necessary to prevent and treat this disease. Scientists and medical professionals have made great progress in developing innovative treatments, improving diagnostic tools, and increasing our understanding of cancer. These advances have helped people with cancer live longer, healthier lives.

All Americans can reduce their risk of developing cancer by following healthy eating habits, exercising regularly, avoiding tobacco and excessive use of alcohol, and controlling their weight. By scheduling regular physicals, getting preventive health screenings, and being aware of their family history, individuals who do develop cancer can increase the likelihood that it will be discovered at an earlier and more treatable stage. I encourage all our citizens to talk to their doctors and learn more about preventive measures that can save lives.

My Administration remains dedicated to finding a cure for cancer. Since 2005, the

Cancer Genome Atlas has played a role in advancing cancer research, and it is helping scientists learn more about the genetic sources of cancer. We continue to support the innovative advances needed to bring hope to those affected, and we will continue to fight cancer.

As we observe Cancer Control Month, we honor cancer survivors for their determination, courage, and strength, and we remember those who lost their valiant fight against cancer. Their stories are an inspiration to all Americans. We also recognize medical professionals, researchers, family members, and friends who help support cancer patients. Their efforts improve the quality of life for those suffering from cancer, and their compassion embodies the true spirit of our Nation.

The Congress of the United States, by joint resolution approved March 28, 1938 (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 103), as amended, has requested the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April as "Cancer Control Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 2008 as Cancer Control Month. I encourage citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that raise awareness about how all Americans can prevent and control cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, 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, 9:03 a.m., April 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 3.

Proclamation 8230—National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 2008

April 1, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Children are the hope and promise of our Nation, and our society has a special duty to ensure young Americans get the care and attention they need to succeed in life. During National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we underscore our commitment to preventing child abuse and neglect so that all children can live in safety and security.

Parents have a responsibility to safeguard their children from danger and to provide the love, protection, and guidance youngsters need to grow into confident and caring adults. In every community across the Nation, good and courageous citizens are improving the lives of our most vulnerable children with acts of compassion. The strength of America lies in the ability of our citizens to make a positive difference in the lives of our young people.

My Administration is committed to the safety of our Nation's youth. In 2006, I signed into law the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, which was designed to protect children from sexual and other violent crimes, help prevent child pornography, and make the Internet safer for our children. This law expands sex offender registration and notification on a nationwide basis, provides a statutory basis for the Project Safe Childhood program, and gives communities and law enforcement the tools necessary to keep children out of harm's way. Additionally, with strengthened Federal penalties, we will ensure that those who prey on our children will be caught, prosecuted, and punished to the fullest extent of the law.

As we observe National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we reaffirm our loving commitment to America's youth and our dedication to building a society in which all children can realize their full potential.

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 April 2008 as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. I encourage all citizens to help protect our children from abuse and neglect and to take an active role in creating safe communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, 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, 9:03 a.m., April 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 3.

Proclamation 8231—National Donate Life Month, 2008

April 1, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Every human life has matchless value, and during National Donate Life Month, we reaffirm our commitment to raising awareness about the importance of organ donation. We also express our appreciation to those who have donated organs, tissue, and marrow.

Thousands of Americans are currently on the waiting list for an organ or tissue transplant. I urge all Americans to register with their State's donor registry; fill out, sign, and carry an organ donor card; say yes to organ donation on their driver's license; and share their decision with family and friends. By taking these steps, Americans can help save lives. My Administration is committed to strengthening organ and tissue donation programs and awareness activities. Just last year, I was pleased to sign the "Charlie W. Norwood Living Organ Donation Act," which helps match more donors with those in need of transplants. The kindness and generosity of donors reflect the compassionate spirit of our Nation.

During National Donate Life Month, we celebrate the life-saving work of medical professionals and researchers and the many others whose actions reflect our commitment to

a brighter tomorrow. Individuals can visit organdonor.gov to learn more about organ and tissue donation and how they can give the gift of life.

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 April 2008 as National Donate Life Month. I call upon health care professionals, volunteers, educators, government agencies, faith-based and community groups, and private organizations to help raise awareness of the urgent need for organ and tissue donors throughout our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, 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, 9:03 a.m., April 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 3.

Proclamation 8232—National Fair Housing Month, 2008

April 1, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During National Fair Housing Month, our Nation commemorates the 40th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act and reaffirms our dedication to maintaining equal access to housing for every American.

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Fair Housing Act. This important legislation was one of a series of civil rights laws that sought to secure the rights of individuals and extend the full blessings of liberty to all Americans. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing and, in doing so, furthers the ideals championed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other heroes of the civil rights movement.

Our Nation has come a long way, yet our journey to justice is not complete. While the housing market works through this difficult period, my Administration remains steadfast in its commitment to help responsible homeowners, to end discrimination, and to work to ensure that all citizens have access to housing. During National Fair Housing Month, we acknowledge our responsibility to ensure that all Americans enjoy the opportunities that this great land of liberty offers.

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 April 2008 as National Fair Housing Month. I call upon the people of the United States to learn more about their rights and responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, 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, 9:03 a.m., April 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 3.

Remarks in Bucharest, Romania

April 2, 2008

Thank you all. Thank you, and good morning. I appreciate former Presidents Iliescu and Constantinescu for joining us today. I want to thank the President of Latvia and Mrs. Zatlere for joining us. Secretary Rice, ambassadors, Members of the United States Congress, the president of the National Bank of Savings, members of the German Marshall Fund and the Atlantic Council, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: *Buna ziua*.

Laura and I are pleased to be back in Bucharest. The last time we were here, we stood with the people of this city in Revolution Square for a rally celebrating Romania's invitation to join NATO. Tens of thousands came out in the rain to rejoice in this achievement and revel in the promise that, henceforth,

no one would ever take Romania's freedom away. It was a moment I will never forget. President Iliescu introduced me in the midst of the drizzling rain. And then the clouds parted, and a rainbow appeared in the sky, heralding a new day for this nation and the Atlantic alliance she was about to join.

Since then, Romania has made strong contributions to the alliance. Romanian soldiers have brought courage to NATO's missions. Romanian leaders have brought moral clarity to NATO's deliberations. And today the Romanian people have brought their famous hospitality to this NATO summit. Laura and I are thrilled to join you for this historic occasion. And the American people are honored to call Romania a friend, an ally, and a partner in the cause of peace.

This is my final NATO summit. The coming days will be a time for hard work, as allies make important decisions regarding the expansion and the missions and the capabilities of NATO. The coming days will also be a time of reflection, a chance to look back on how far we have come in the past 7 years and what this tells us about the challenges ahead.

In June 2001, I came to Europe and spoke to students and faculty at Warsaw University. I reaffirmed America's commitment to a united Europe, bound to the United States by ties of history and trade and friendship. I said that Europe must overturn the bitter legacy of Yalta and remove the false boundaries that had divided the continent for too long. I declared that all of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, should have the same chance for security and freedom and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe.

I spoke those words on the soil of a nation on the Baltic. Today a nation on the Black Sea is where I have come to say, those words have been fulfilled. The NATO alliance that meets here this week now stretches from the shores of Klaipeda to the beaches of Neptun. And here in Bucharest, we will extend the circle of freedom even further by expanding the NATO alliance to include new members from the Balkans.

A decade—the Balkans was a region wracked by war and fanaticism and ethnic cleansing. Today, it is a region growing in

liberty and tolerance and peace. These changes are the result of determined actions by NATO and the courageous choices by new Balkan leaders who have worked to overcome the violence and divisions of the past. In recognition of their progress, tomorrow NATO will make an historic decision on the admission of three Balkan nations: Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia. The United States strongly supports inviting these nations to join NATO. These countries have walked the difficult path of reform and built thriving free societies. They are ready to contribute to NATO, and their citizens deserve the security that NATO brings.

As we welcome new NATO allies, we also affirm that the door to NATO membership remains open to other nations that seek it, in the Balkans and beyond. So at this summit, we will also decide whether to accept the requests of two other Balkan nations, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, to begin an intensified dialog with NATO. This is a major step on the road to NATO membership, and it is a step that America fully supports for these two nations. And at our summit tomorrow, we will also make clear that the door to closer cooperation with NATO is open to Serbia as well.

This week, our alliance must also decide how to respond to the requests by Georgia and Ukraine to participate in NATO's Membership Action Plan. These two nations inspired the world with their Rose and Orange Revolutions, and now they're working to consolidate their democratic gains and cement their independence. Welcoming them into the NATO—into the Membership Action Plan would send a signal to their citizens that if they continue on the path to democracy and reform, they will be welcomed into the institutions of Europe. It would send a signal throughout the region that these two nations are and will remain sovereign and independent states.

Here in Bucharest, we must make clear that NATO welcomes the aspirations of Georgia and Ukraine for their membership in NATO and offers them a clear path forward to meet that goal. So my country's position is clear: NATO should welcome Georgia and Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan. And NATO membership must remain

open to all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share in the responsibilities of NATO membership.

The most important responsibility of NATO is the collective security of our citizens. On my 2001 visit to Warsaw, I said that the United States and Europe share more than an alliance; we share a civilization. Less than 3 months later, that shared civilization came under a monstrous attack. Even now, with the distance of time, it's still difficult to fathom the enormity of what happened on September the 11th, 2001. Thousands of men and women woke up that morning, had breakfast with their families, and left for work, never to return home. Tens of thousands more, including citizens of many NATO nations, still mourn the loss of moms and dads, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, friends and loved ones who were taken from them in a horrific moment of violence and death.

NATO nations recognize that the attacks were part of a broader ideological struggle. The terrorists who struck America that day murder the innocent in pursuit of a violent political vision. They despise the principles of decency and humanity that are the very foundation of our alliance. They want to impose their brutal rule on millions across the world. They attack our countries and target our people because we stand for freedom and because we hold the power to stop them from achieving their murderous ambitions.

NATO nations recognized that this unprecedented attack required unprecedented action. For the first time in the history of the alliance, Article 5 of the NATO Treaty was invoked. NATO aircraft were soon flying over the United States to provide early warning in case of a follow-on attack. Many NATO nations, including the United Kingdom and France, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey, deployed forces to fight the terrorists in Afghanistan and to drive the Taliban from power.

Since then, NATO's role in Afghanistan has expanded significantly. In 2003, NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force. And over time, this NATO mission has grown from a small force operating only in Kabul to a force of 47,000 that is

now leading operations across all of Afghanistan. Afghanistan is the most daring and ambition mission in the history of NATO. An alliance that never fired a shot in the cold war is now leading the fight on a key battleground of the first war in the 21st century. In Afghanistan, forces from NATO and many partner nations are bringing honor to their uniforms and pride to their countries.

As NATO forces fight the terrorists in Afghanistan, they're helping Afghans take increasing responsibility for their own security. With NATO's help, the ranks of trained Afghan soldiers have grown from 33,000 last year to 55,000 today. And these brave Afghan forces are leading many important combat operations. Thanks to their courage and the skill of NATO personnel, a nation that was once a safe haven for Al Qaida is now a democracy where boys and girls are going to school, new roads and hospitals are being built, and people are looking to the future with new hope.

Afghanistan still faces many challenges. The enemy has been driven from its strongholds and no longer controls a single Afghan city. But as this enemy has been defeated on the battlefield, they have turned increasingly to terrorist tactics such as suicide attacks and roadside bombs. And if we were to let up the pressure, the extremists would reestablish safe havens across the country and use them to terrorize the people of Afghanistan and threaten our own. And that is why we'll stay on the offense, and that is why we'll keep the pressures on these radicals and extremists, and that is why we'll succeed.

Terrorists used safe havens in Afghanistan to launch the 9/11 attacks. Since 9/11, Al Qaida terrorists around the world have succeeded in launching devastating attacks on allied cities such as Madrid and London and Istanbul. They planned more attacks on targets in Europe that never came to pass because of the vigilance of intelligence and law enforcement personnel from many of our nations. For example, in 2006, we stopped an Al Qaida plot to blow up passenger jets departing Europe for the United States. Earlier this year, Turkish authorities broke up an Al Qaida cell that was plotting a series of terrorist attacks on Turkey. This enemy remains

dangerous, and that's why our alliance is so important to protecting innocent people.

Two weeks ago, Usama bin Laden issued an audio recording in which he threatened Europe with new attacks. We need to take the words of the enemy seriously. The terrorist threat is real; it is deadly. And defeating this enemy is the top priority of NATO.

Our alliance must maintain its resolve and finish the fight in NATO. As President Sarkozy put it in London last week: "We cannot afford to lose Afghanistan. Whatever the cost, however difficult the victory, we cannot afford it. We must win." I agree completely. To ensure that we do win, France is sending additional forces to Afghanistan. The United States is deploying an additional 3,500 marines. Romania is adding forces, as are several other allies. We ask other NATO nations to step forward with additional forces as well. If we do not defeat the terrorists in Afghanistan, we will face them on our own soil. Innocent civilians in Europe and North America would then pay the price.

The struggle in Afghanistan cannot be won by force of arms alone. We must also help the Afghan Government strengthen democratic institutions, provide essential services, create jobs and opportunity, and show its people that freedom can lead to a better life. But for this to happen, Afghanistan needs security, and that is what NATO is helping to provide.

Many NATO allies are also helping to bring security and stability to the other major front in this war against extremists and radicals: Iraq. At this moment, 10 NATO nations have forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, including the Black Wolves of Romania's 151st Infantry. The battalion has given their base in Iraq a fearsome name: Camp Dracula. Romanian troops are operating unmanned aerial vehicles, protecting critical infrastructure, conducting human intelligence missions, providing medical care, and carrying out combat operations in Iraq.

One Romanian soldier put it this way: "I've been here before and will come back for as many times as needed. I know that what we do is important." Our Romanian allies are serving the cause of freedom in Iraq with skill and honor, and they have earned the respect of my countrymen.

Forces from 14 NATO nations plus Ukraine are also serving in Iraq as part of a NATO training mission. NATO has trained more than 7,000 Iraqi officers so far. The Iraqis have asked us to expand this mission, and we should do so. At our summit this week, we will also expand the NATO-Iraq partnership, so we can allow more Iraqi officers to attend NATO schools and seminars. The purpose is to prepare Iraqi officers to lead their own troops in battle, so we can help them defend their democracy against the terrorists and extremists who murder their people.

Iraqi forces are fighting bravely in this struggle, and they're risking and giving their lives in the fight against our common enemies. To help them prevail, last year, the United States launched the surge in Iraq. We deployed 30,000 additional soldiers and marines, with a clear mission: Help Iraqi forces protect the people; pursue the enemy in its strongholds; and deny the terrorists sanctuary. The Government in Baghdad has stepped forward with a surge of its own, adding more than 100,000 new Iraqi soldiers and police during the past year. And to ensure that military progress in Iraq is quickly followed up with real improvements in daily life, we doubled the number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq. These teams are helping to build up local economies and strengthen responsible leaders and help bring Iraqis together, so that reconciliation can happen from the ground up.

The surge has produced results across Iraq. Compared to a year ago, violence is significantly down, civilian deaths are down, sectarian killings are down, and attacks on coalition forces are down. We've captured or killed thousands of extremists in Iraq, including hundreds of key Al Qaida leaders and operatives. With security improving, local citizens have restarted the political process in their neighborhoods and their cities and Provinces. And leaders in Baghdad are beginning to make the tough compromises necessary to get important pieces of legislation passed.

As they do, we will stay on the offense against the enemy. In the north, Iraqi forces backed by American troops are pursuing Al Qaida terrorists who are operating in and

around Mosul. In the south, Prime Minister Maliki sent the Iraqi security forces to begin to root out extremists and criminals in Basra, many of whom have received arms and training and funding from Iran. In retaliation, some of these extremist elements fired rockets into the center of Baghdad hoping to shake Prime Minister Maliki's will. They're not going to succeed. There's tough fighting ahead, but the gains from the surge we have seen are real. And working together with Iraqi forces, our coalition will continue to pursue our enemies and seal their defeat.

The surge has done more than turn the situation around in Iraq; it has opened the door to a major strategic victory in the broader war against extremists. In Iraq, we're witnessing the first large-scale Arab uprising against Usama bin Laden and his grim ideology and his terrorist network. Tens of thousands of ordinary citizens have stepped forward to join the fight against Al Qaida. And when Iraqi and coalition forces defeat this enemy, the effects will reverberate beyond Iraq's borders.

By defeating the enemy in Iraq, we will show people across the Middle East that millions share their revulsion of terrorists' hateful ideology. We will show that free men and women can stand up to the terrorists and prevail against them. We will show that America will not abandon our friends in the fight against terror and extremism. We will show that a hopeful vision of liberty can take root in a troubled region and yield the peace that we all desire. And we will show that the future of the Middle East does not belong to terror; the future of the Middle East belongs to freedom.

As NATO allies fight terror and promote progress in Iraq and Afghanistan, our alliance is taking on other important missions across the world. In the Mediterranean, NATO forces are patrolling the high seas to combat terrorism as part of Operation Active Endeavor. In Kosovo, NATO forces are providing security and helping a new democracy take root in the Balkans. In Darfur, NATO has airlifted African Union peacekeepers and provided them with training to protect the people of that troubled region. The alliance stands ready to provide further assistance to the AU—African Union force.

Each of these missions underscores the changing nature of the NATO alliance. See, NATO is no longer a static alliance focused on defending Europe from a Soviet tank invasion. It is now an expeditionary alliance that is sending its forces across the world to help secure a future of freedom and peace for millions.

To meet the missions of the 21st century, NATO needs 21st century capabilities. So over the past 7 years, we've taken decisive action to transform the capabilities of this alliance. We created a new NATO transformation command to ensure that NATO is preparing for the threats of the future. We created a new NATO Response Force to ensure that our alliance can deploy rapidly and effectively anywhere in the world. We launched a new Strategic Airlift Initiative to ensure that NATO members have a dedicated fleet of aircraft their forces need to deploy and sustain themselves over great distances. We've created a new NATO special operations coordinator—coordination center in Belgium to increase the interoperability and effectiveness of our special forces.

One of the most important steps we can take is to protect our—to protect our citizens is the deployment of new capabilities to defend against a ballistic missile attack. On 9/11, we saw the damage our enemies could do by hijacking planes loaded with jet fuel, turning them into missiles, and using them to strike innocent people. Today, dangerous regimes are pursuing far more powerful capabilities and building ballistic missiles that could allow them to deliver the world's most dangerous weapons to capitals of free nations.

To defend against this emerging threat, the United States has deployed missile defenses in the Pacific that can protect against threats emanating from Northeast Asia. And we're now deploying elements of this system to Europe, so we can defend against possible attacks emanating from the Middle East.

The need for missile defense in Europe is real, and in my opinion, it is urgent. Iran is pursuing technology that could be used to produce nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles of increasing range that could deliver them. In 2006, Iran conducted military exercises in which it launched ballistic missiles

capable of striking Israel and Turkey. Iranian officials have declared that they are developing missiles with a range of 1,200 miles, which would give them the capability to reach us right here in Romania. Our intelligence community assesses that, with continued foreign assistance, Iran could test an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States and all of Europe if it should choose to do so.

Today, we have no way to defend Europe against such an emerging threat, so we must deploy ballistic missile defenses that can help protect. The United States is working with Poland and the Czech Republic to deploy a system that could defend countries in Europe from a limited, long-range attack from the Middle East. We're working with NATO on developing allied capabilities to defend against short- and medium-range attacks from the Middle East. And as we do so, we're inviting Russia to join us in this cooperative effort, so as to be able to defend Russia, Europe, and the United States against an emerging threat that could affect us all.

President Putin has raised the possibility of using radar facilities in Azerbaijan and southern Russia. We believe these sites could be included as part of a wider threat monitoring system that could lead to an unprecedented level of strategic cooperation between Russia and the NATO alliance. We can only imagine the devastation that would be caused by a ballistic missile attack on one of our cities. So I believe strongly we have a responsibility to work together to ensure that such attack never comes to pass.

This week President Putin is planning to attend his first NATO summit, and later this week I plan to travel to Sochi, Russia, for further talks on this and other matters. In our discussions, I will reiterate that the missile defense capabilities we are developing are not designed to defend against Russia, just as the new NATO we are building is not designed to defend against Russia. The cold war is over. Russia is not our enemy. We're working toward a new security relationship with Russia, whose foundation does not rest on the prospect of mutual annihilation.

In Warsaw 7 years ago, I said that the Europe we envision must be open to Russia. During my Presidency, we've acted to make

that vision a reality. With our allies, we created the NATO-Russia Council to facilitate greater cooperation between Russia and the Atlantic alliance. The United States and Russia signed the Moscow Treaty, which commits our two nations to historic reductions in our operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads. And as we look to the future, I believe we can build strong relations with Russia and a strong NATO alliance at the same time.

Building a strong NATO alliance also requires a strong European defense capability. So at this summit, I will encourage our European partners to increase their defense investments to support both NATO and EU operations. America believes if Europeans invest in their own defense, they will also be stronger and more capable when we deploy together.

I have confidence that NATO is ready for the challenges of the 21st century because I have confidence in the courage of allies like Romania. The Romanian people have seen evil in their midst, and they've seen evil defeated. They value freedom because they've lived without it. And this hard experience has inspired them to fight and sacrifice for the liberty of others.

That is precisely what Romanian forces are doing on behalf of this alliance. We see their courage in soldiers like Second Lieutenant Aurel Marcu of Romania's 33d Mountain Battalion. Last fall, Aurel's unit was in Afghanistan when it got word that an American soldier—American soldiers from the Arizona National Guard had been struck by a roadside bomb. Several were injured, one of them fatally. Aurel and his comrades swung into action and responded to the call for assistance. As his unit sped to the scene of the attack, Aurel's vehicle was struck by a second roadside bomb, killing him instantly. Aurel gave his life rushing to the aid of wounded American soldiers. His example and his valor are an inspiration to all of us. I very much appreciate his wife joining us today, and I want her to know that she and her family have the gratitude and the respect and the prayers of the American people.

Our troops are proud to fight alongside allies like this. We appreciate courage. We appreciate people who love freedom. We appreciate people who understand freedom will yield the peace that we all want. We value our friendship with Romania, and we value the Atlantic alliance that we share. America is united with our European allies by ties of blood that our soldiers have shed together. We're united by ties of conviction, a shared belief that every human life is precious and endowed by our Creator with dignity and worth. We're united by ties of liberty and by an abiding faith in the power of freedom to change the course of history. Strengthened by these convictions, tested in battle, and confident in our future, this great alliance for freedom is ready for all that will come.

Thank you for your time. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 a.m. at the Casa di Economii si Consemnatuni. In his remarks, he referred to former Presidents Ion Iliescu and Emil Constantinescu of Romania; President Valdis Zatlers of Latvia and his wife, Lilita Zatlere; Radu Gratian Ghetea, president, Casa de Economii si Consemnatuni; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and Aurelia Marcu, wife of Romanian Army 2d Lt. Aurel Marcu, who was killed in Afghanistan on September 6, 2007.

The President's News Conference With President Traian Basescu of Romania in Neptun, Romania

April 2, 2008

President Basescu. Well, Mr. President, you will be the first.

President Bush. Well, thank you very much. *Buna ziua.* Mr. President, thank you very much for your warm hospitality. Laura and I are thrilled to be with you and your lovely wife. I can't think of a better place to meet. It's such a beautiful setting, and you're awfully kind to have invited us to be here. After all, that's what friends do, though. And our relationship is very strong, and it's very friendly.

I admire your courage, and I admire your leadership. And I want to thank you for hosting us—hosting NATO in Bucharest. It

is—you know, it's a big deal. And what's interesting is, 20 years ago, our nations were separated by a cold war, and Romania was a member of the Warsaw Pact, and the Romanian people suffered under a cruel dictator. Today, think how things have changed. The Romanian people are free; we're strong allies. We appreciate you in NATO, and I want to thank you for your historic contributions to NATO.

I want to thank you and the people of Romania for your contributions to Afghanistan. There are about 600 Romanian troops there. The Afghan people are grateful, as am I. I want to thank you for your contribution to the troops in Iraq. These are tough decisions, but I think they're necessary decisions to keep the peace. You and I have discussed our desire to work closely with those countries to encourage their success, for their sake and for the sake of peace.

I appreciate very much our discussions we had on NATO enlargement. Romania and the United States agree that our alliance must continue to be open to new members that share our values and to make tough choices to reform and—countries that are willing to address our security needs jointly. To this end, I strongly believe that Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia should join NATO as full members, that we ought to extend MAP to Ukraine and Georgia, and that we strongly support the requests of Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina for intensified dialog with the NATO alliance, and that we ought to open the door to closer cooperation with Serbia. And I thank you for your advice on these issues, and I appreciate your stand.

I also appreciate your leadership in the Black Sea region. Maybe that's why you invited me here, because you're showing such good leadership in the Black Sea region. *[Laughter]* But we share your concerns about enhanced security and making sure this part of the world becomes relevant in a global economy. That's why we've contributed \$10 million to the Black Sea Trust, to help fund programs across the region, to strengthen civil society programs, the rule of law, and democratic governance.

I want to thank you very much for your view of the market, that markets flourish and grow when entrepreneurs are encouraged.

The Romanian economy is strong. One of the reasons we launched the Romanian-American education foundation and made it go forward is because of the success of your economy and your entrepreneurs. And I want to congratulate you on your rate of growth and on your vision.

And all in all, Mr. President, I am really glad I came. And I thank you and Mrs. for your hospitality. I appreciate the really good lunch. If the American press hasn't eaten Romanian ice cream, I strongly suggest you try it. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much, sir.

President Basescu. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Firstly, Mr. President, I would like to extend my thanks to you for offering the invitation to reserve a few hours for a visit on the land where I was born, in Dobrogea on the Black Sea shore. Just as we have discussed in Washington 2005–2006, our partnership has exceeded for long time the stage of a simple partnership, military partnership, a partnership that was envisaged firstly Romanian security.

We're now in the stage of the partnership with a very strong and consistent economic component. Following 2005, Oracle was present in Romania, also Smithfield, with great investment in the food industry, and lastly, also Ford is present here. And this means that the Romanian-American partnership covers practically all the aspects, and we hope to a further development.

I would like to extend my thanks to you for the attention that your administration has been paying to the Black Sea region, for your concern related to the security in the Black Sea region, and for your concern related to the need to guarantee democracy in the Black Sea region.

Moreover, Mr. President, I would like to underline the confidence that the United States has had in the Romanian Army by placing under Romanian command important troops in Afghanistan. It was a token of confidence that you have given to us, and we are aware that it is very rare that the United States placed their troops under the command of other countries. Thank you very much.

To conclude, I would like to underline the similarity of approach concerning the region

where we find—whether we speak about the Balkans or Ukraine or Georgia. Our approaches envisage mainly Romania's security and the security of the region. And we're glad to see that although the United States are far from this region, they have understood our concerns, the priorities of our country and of our region. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for answering with no hesitation to what we have established.

I would like to assure you at the same time that Romania will respect all its engagements, both the ones related to the relation with NATO and with the European Union, and also the ones related to the partnership and our bilateral relation. Thank you.

Questions?

President Bush. Are we starting with the Americans? Who do you think I ought to call on? Okay, I'll call on Roger [Roger Runingen, Bloomberg News].

Troop Levels in Afghanistan

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. On Afghanistan, you're seeking increased commitments from NATO. There have been some new pledges. Are they enough? How many figures—how many troops are needed? Are you satisfied with the pledges, and what are the consequences if those pledges fall short?

President Bush. We expect our NATO allies to shoulder the burden necessary to succeed. And to this end, as you know, I've committed 3,200–3,500 additional marines to send a clear signal that we're willing to do our part.

I was very pleased to listen to the comments of President Sarkozy, where he indicated his willingness to increase troop presence. Other nations have agreed to step up, including Romania. And so we'll see how it goes. That's what summits are for. Summits are for opportunities for people to make clear their intentions about how they intend to support this very important mission.

And obviously, I am grateful for any nation that contributes troops to Afghanistan, as are the Afghan people. And clearly some nations are more capable than others of—in sending troops into combat, into harm's way. We fully understand the politics that prohibit some nations from contributing, but nations need to take this mission seriously because it's in

our mutual interests. It's in our interest, of course, to help young democracies survive. But in this case, it's in our interest to help succeed, because we don't want an enemy that has been known to attack people—nations in our alliance—to be able to develop safe haven again, to be able to use a launching pad like Afghanistan to plot, plan, and attack.

So this is a vital mission. And it's hard work. It's a tough mission. And our allies have got to understand it's hard. Taking democracy out of the rubble of this—of the Taliban is hard to do, just like it is in Iraq. So the question nations have to ask: Is it worth it? And my answer is, absolutely, it's worth it—and so is the President—it's worth it for our own security, and it's worth it for the cause of peace.

President Basescu. Thank you. Regarding Afghanistan, we have a main idea that any lack of success of the NATO in Afghanistan will diminish dramatically the credibility of our organization. And for the time being, the civilized world don't have alternatives to the security than NATO. We have to do everything what we can in order to make a success in our action in Afghanistan: granting democratic development of the country, economic development of the country, security of the country, and eliminating the terrorist risks which are generated by this region. Sure, we have a extremely clear idea if we don't keep the terrorists in Afghanistan. If we will let them free, they'll come in Europe, they'll come in United States. For this reason, we have to win; we have to obtain the victory in Afghanistan.

Romania/Black Sea Region

Q. President, getting back to Romania now, behind you there is the Black Sea. Romania has insisted—

President Bush. And a few birds too. [Laughter]

Q. —there is time—has insisted that NATO has to focus its attention upon this region as well. Following the talks today, did you establish a common vision, Romania and United States, as regards the future of this region?

President Basescu. [Inaudible]

Q. For both, thank you.

President Bush. Okay, thank you. Your English is better than you let on. [Laughter] I take the advice of the President on the Black Sea. He knows it well. After all, he's sailed many a vessel on this sea. As a matter of fact, I was asking the President about his days as a seafarer, a captain, and he explained to me that recently he got his captain's license renewed. [Laughter] So not only does—is he a skillful person, he loves the Black Sea, and he understands the potential of the Black Sea.

And that's why we were happy to contribute to the Black Sea Trust Fund, as a way to help him and other visionary leaders realize the full potential of the Black Sea region. I mean, there's work to be done on regional security matters. Obviously, to the extent that people feel like they can smuggle people or drugs, then there needs to be a strategy to deal with that. The idea of trafficking human beings is abhorrent, and nobody in—any civilized person who accepts that, you know, is just—needs to have their head examined. And yet the President fully understands that cooperation here will help deal with the issue.

We need to promote economic cooperation. There's great potential—economic potential here. We need to promote the scenario where you can promote energy independence. All nations ought to have a variety of sources of energy from which to choose, so it's never become captured by a single supplier.

And so I fully understand the strategic importance of this area, and there's been nobody more clear and articulate on the subject than the President. And I want to thank you for your leadership.

President Basescu. Thank you, Mr. President. As regards the Black Sea, the talks have also comprised the idea of supporting the states that have democratic options, of consolidating their institutions. The main idea, the main focus was on combating the asymmetric risks, such as the drug trafficking, persons trafficking, arms trafficking, and not lastly, our objective, the objectives that Romania's allies have endorsed, be it the European Union that has issued the Black Sea

Synergy document, be it NATO. Our objective is that this region becomes a secure region, because nobody can be certain about the future if the security is not guaranteed. And this is the major objective that Romania has been promoting, the objective that our allies have endorsed and that we support further on, and that will remain a major foreign policy objective for Romania.

President Bush. Jim [Jim Gerstenzang, Los Angeles Times].

Russia/Missile Defense System/Global Foreign Policy

Q. Mr. President, you pointed out this morning how much the NATO mission has changed. It's changed dramatically over the past decades. Russia still seems to be casting a huge shadow, most recently with missile defense, with NATO expansion. Has some things not changed? Can you avoid what would appear to be something of a diplomatic train wreck when you meet with President Putin?

President Bush. I mean, look, I'm going to meet with President Putin to make it clear to him the cold war is over and Russia is not our enemy and that there's common ground. Obviously, I've had my disagreements with the President in the past, and—but there's also areas where we need to work in common, such as proliferation and dealing with terror. And I've got some convincing to do, but he needs to understand, the missile defense system is aimed at—aimed primarily at rogue regimes coming out of the Middle East that could hold us all hostage. And this is a good—it's a good chance for me to sit down and have yet another heart-to-heart with him. And I'm more than happy to do so.

I made it clear yesterday that NATO needs to look at expansion in our interests, not—and not give any nation a veto power over whether or not NATO ought to extend MAP membership and/or membership. And so it's—you know, I understand Russian concerns about the expanse of NATO. They were concerned when Romania got into NATO, I'm confident. But look what a great partner and a peaceful neighbor Romania is. I mean, Romania has no warlike aspirations. These are people who want to help other de-

mocracies thrive and, at the same time, see their economy grow. I've explained to President Putin, democracies on the border of Russia are in their interest.

And so this is a good opportunity. I don't mind a good, frank discussion with President Putin. He doesn't mind telling me what's on his mind either. We've had 7 years working together, a chance to have some pretty candid exchanges. And secondly—and this is his last—this will be our last face-to-face meeting as his Presidency. And I'll thank him. I'll thank him for being candid with me. I'll thank him for serving his nation. I have no animosity toward President Putin. Just because you don't agree on issues doesn't mean you can't find a cordiality, to be able to discuss things in a frank manner, and that's the way our relationship has been. We—I met with him a lot in the course of my Presidency, and I appreciate the fact that he invited me to Sochi.

And so I have no—I'm not going to set any kind of expectations. I guess you are. You call it a diplomatic train wreck; I call it an opportunity to sit down and have a good, frank discussion again. And we'll see what happens, what comes out of it. It's a good opportunity for me to say goodbye and to see whether or not we can sign the strategic dialog that will serve our nations' interest after his Presidency and mine.

President Basescu. From our point of view—and I would like to make a comment here that does not necessarily answer your question—but Romania has a relatively simple approach in relation to its ties with Russia. Firstly, we have to admit that all—we all, and particularly the former Communist states, must equally and perhaps more—to a larger extent, Russia, we all have to overcome the logics of the cold war, because at present, there is nothing to justify this approach, this logic. Each independent state is free to have its options, and nobody can have the right—the veto right upon the options of an independent state.

But apart from this statement that regards more the principles, I would like to point out—to refer to some issues that from our point of view are threats. For example, terrorist is a threat equally for Russia, for America, for Spain, and it can materialize at any

time against Ukraine, against Georgia. So I would like to—I could say that in this point, in this respect, we are all at the same level of risk.

The trafficking in arms is an equal threat for the Russian Federation, for the United States, for Romania, for Ukraine, for Georgia, for Albania as well. This is another issue that we have to fight against together. The trafficking in narcotics that transforms into money for arms and into generations of youth that are deeply affected—this threat affects equally the Russian Federation, Romania, America, France, Germany. Trafficking in human beings is another risk that affects equally Russia, America, Ukraine, Romania. And a possible cyber attack can be deployed with an equal risk for Russia, for Romania, for America. Missile attacks that are deployed by countries that do not respect the rules, that are not part of the proliferation treaties—this risk can affect, at any time, the Russian Federation, America, Romania, Ukraine.

Seeing—finding that the risks are the same, are almost similar for everybody, why can't we find a common ground for solidarity between us, among us—NATO member states, Russia Federation, aspiring NATO states—a common ground for generating the same policy? Actually, the only thing that hinders us from acting united against the risks that affect us equally is the fact that some of us are still attached to the logics, to the approach of the cold war, and do not have an equal respect for the democratic rights of the peoples.

U.S. Visa Policy/Romania-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, the Romanian people, the Romanians have a great expectations with regards to the very good ties, political and economic, between the two states. In a very practical manner, they will ask, when will we have the same regime as the other citizens from the European Union with regards to the visas? Could we have a deadline for this when we could travel freely to the United States?

President Bush. First of all, your President was very articulate on the subject of visas. One of the benefits of having a good friendship is that he's not afraid of telling

me what's on his mind. [*Laughter*] And he made it abundantly clear that visa policy in America must take into account Romanian past and also Romanian future and present. In other words—and I fully understand the frustrations of the Romanian people. I understand it. I understand that a citizen says, "Wait a minute. We're contributing soldiers in Iraq, and yet we're not necessarily treated like other nations in the European collective or European Union."

And those frustrations are clearly understandable. That's why I went to Congress and tried to get them to modernize the visa law. And all they—although they changed the law, it still creates certain hurdles for nations like Romania. And I assured the President that we will work with him as best as we can to adhere to our law and to, at the same time, understands the contradictions.

It's—hopefully, the new law will—and our cooperation—will make it easier for Romanian citizens to come and visit their relatives. And obviously, to the extent that somebody tries to come and not come back is something we all got to guard about. That's—but the idea of somebody coming to visit a relative or a long-lost cousin to say hello and to see what America is like and then come back to Romania is an issue that we just got to be thoughtful about.

And so, yes, I mean, this is—this subject came up. It is clear there's a level of frustration. I explained our new law is in effect, and we'll work closely with the Romanian Government to meet our law and, at the same time, meet the demands of a strong and good ally.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

President Basescu. Thank you very much.

President Bush. Right, you want to go over here?

President Basescu. Just a moment.

President Bush. Oh, you got—

President Basescu. Just a moment.

President Bush. He's not through.

President Basescu. The information I would like to add to refer to two delicate issues, issues that are visible for the Romanian public. We have also approached—we have also addressed the visa issue and also the Teo Peter issue. And we hope to find,

in time, the decision taken by President Bush was that, in the near future, we will launch the bilateral mechanism that—apart from the European ones. And referring to the other issue, to find as fast as possible a reasonable solution acceptable for the family of Teo Peter.

Thank you.

President Bush. He's going to show me this wharf out here. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:40 p.m. at the Protocol Villas Neptun-Olimp. President Bush referred to Maria Basescu, wife of President Basescu; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. President Basescu and some reporters spoke partly in Romanian, and those portions of their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

**Remarks Following a Discussion
With Secretary General Jakob
Gijsbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer of
the North Atlantic Treaty
Organization in Bucharest
April 2, 2008**

President Bush. Thank you for your time, and thank you for organizing the Bucharest summit. I appreciate your service very much to the cause of world peace, and I want to thank you for your briefing. I'm, like you, optimistic that this is going to be a very successful summit.

We came in with some objectives in mind. One was to get NATO to continue to support Afghanistan's democracy. And I feel good about what I'm hearing from my fellow leaders about their desire to support Afghanistan. And I think if tomorrow we get clarification on troop support, I think the people of Afghanistan—the way you indicated it may be—the people of Afghanistan are going to be more than grateful. And the people whose nations are represented in NATO will be supporting a cause that is worthy, a cause for peace.

Secondly, you and I discussed the need for a comprehensive missile defense regime out of NATO. And it looks like to me that the ingredients are coming together where that could be a distinct possibility. And that would be a very important statement because

NATO could assure its members and the people within NATO that there will be defenses available to prevent a Middle Eastern nation, for example, from launching a strike which could harm our security.

We've also talked, obviously, about enlargement. And we'll see, on enlargement. There's an issue with one country, in particular, but it looks—I'm optimistic that this will get solved. And finally, of course, Ukraine and Georgia is a very difficult issue for some nations here. It's not for me. I think that these nations are qualified nations to apply for membership application. And I said so on Ukrainian soil. I also said so in the Oval Office with the President of Georgia. And I haven't changed my mind, because it's—one of the great things about NATO is it encourages the kind of habits that are necessary for peace to exist.

And today in a press conference, I was asked, Mr. Secretary General, about Russia's reactions. I said, I have always told Vladimir Putin, my friend, that it's in his interest that there be democracies on her border, and that he doesn't need to fear NATO; he ought to welcome NATO because NATO is a group of nations dedicated to peace. And so I appreciate your hard work, and I'm excited about tomorrow's—about tonight's meeting and tomorrow's meetings as well.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Mr. President, thank you for having us and your Afghanistan position. I can share your and echo your optimism, I think, on NATO's key operational priority, which is Afghanistan. We will do well. We will do well in the political sense because we will publish a vision document, as we call it, which is a clear sign of our commitments not only of NATO but of the whole international community; long-term commitment vis-a-vis Afghanistan, which is important for them, for the Afghan people, but is also important for the reason that said we should not forget that we are on one of the frontlines in a fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. And that is a major argument and a major reason that we cannot afford not to prevail. And we are prevailing in Afghanistan. So I think that's good news. And President Karzai, to whom I spoke this morning, reconfirms that good news.

I'm optimistic about enlargement, Mr. President. I think that enlarging the NATO family of democratic nations, this value-based organization, is a plus. And I hope that tomorrow will see invitations.

I also hope that we'll see a positive and constructive meeting with the—President Putin and the NATO-Russia Council, with the right tone and the right ambition for practical cooperation.

I'm, like you, Mr. President, optimistic about—optimistic about missile defense. I think the alliance will take a clear position on missile defense, recognizing the threat and working on the answers to that recognized threat.

And last but not least, Mr. President, you mentioned another issue which readily will be discussed: Membership Action Plan for Ukraine and Georgia. I think this can never be a question of “whether.” The “whether” is not questionable. If these nations fulfill the criteria and if they want to enter—want to enter themselves through NATO's open door, I think that door should be open. So that is a discussion that certainly—we certainly are going to have.

We have a large agenda; we have a full agenda. It will be not only NATO's biggest summit ever, but it will also be a very interesting political summit with, I think, very good results.

Mr. President, once again, thank you for having us.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:15 p.m. at the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer referred to President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

Remarks at a North Atlantic Council Summit Meeting in Bucharest

April 3, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Secretary General, President Basescu, thank you all very much.

For nearly six decades, the NATO alliance has been the hope of a world moving toward freedom and justice and away from patterns of conflict and fear. During times of great challenge, we have advanced our ideals. We've stood firm in defending them—firm in defending them, and we have offered NATO's promise to nations willing to undertake the hard work and sacrifices required of its members.

Since the end of the cold war, NATO has welcomed 10 liberated nations to its ranks. These countries have brought new ideas, new enthusiasm, and new vigor. NATO's embrace of these new members has made Europe stronger, safer, and freer. These countries have made our alliance more relevant to the dangers we confront in the new century.

In Bucharest, we're inviting more nations to join us. I'm pleased that the alliance has agreed to invite Albania and Croatia to become members of NATO. Both these nations have demonstrated the ability and the willingness to provide strong and enduring contributions to NATO. Both have undertaken challenging political, economic, and defense reforms. Both have deployed their forces on NATO missions. Albania and Croatia are ready for the responsibility NATO brings, and they will make outstanding members of this alliance.

We regret that we were not able to reach consensus today to invite Macedonia to join the alliance. Macedonia has made difficult reforms at home. It is making major contributions to NATO missions all—abroad. The name issue needs to be resolved quickly so that Macedonia can be welcomed into NATO as soon as possible. In the interim, NATO needs to intensify its engagement with Macedonia—Macedonia to make sure that NATO looks forward to the day when Macedonia takes its place among the members of the Atlantic alliance.

Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia all know the difference between good and evil, because they clearly remember evil's face. These nations do not take their freedom for granted, because they still remember life without it. These nations respect the hard work of building democracy, because they brought it to life in their countries.

The United States and all members of the alliance strongly support the aspirations of their people, and we pledge to stand with them as they continue to work on reform. Together we will continue to help build a Europe that is stable, strong, and free. We'll bring more stability to a once troubled Balkan region. We will be able to demonstrate the benefits that come from siding with the forces of freedom.

NATO's door must remain open to other nations in Europe that share our love for liberty and demonstrate a commitment to reform and seek to strengthen their ties with the transatlantic community. We must give other nations seeking membership a full and fair hearing. As we invite new members today, we're also clear that the progress of enlargement will continue.

The alliance has always welcomed those willing to make the sacrifices necessary to protect our nations and serves as forces for peace. And that is what's made our alliance unbreakable, and that is why NATO remains the most successful alliance in the history on behalf of human freedom.

Congratulations, and thank you.

Secretary General Jakob Gijbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. at the Palace of Parliament. In his remarks, he referred to President Traian Basescu of Romania.

Remarks Following a Discussion With Prime Minister Calin Popescu- Tariceanu of Romania in Bucharest April 4, 2008

Interpreter. Hello; good day. Of course our discussion was a very useful and very pleasant one. We discussed both bilateral issues between Romania and the United States. I expressed to the—to President Bush our gratitude for having had the trust to have Romania organize this important NATO summit in Bucharest.

The organization of the NATO summit in Bucharest was very symbolic. It is part of a much larger vision and concept, this vision being that to strengthen and to unify Europe

after the fall of the Iron Curtain. And the idea was to foster, to strengthen the alliance in the eastern and southeastern flank, from the Baltic Sea all the way to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. That is how we have to interpret the membership of Albania and Croatia to NATO, the future membership of Macedonia, and eventual Georgia and Ukraine membership as well.

But our discussion was not limited to that. We also discussed other issues of political and economic relationship between our countries and about the U.S. investments in our country. And I shared with President Bush my ambition, my hope, and actually, my dream that to see a very important industrial investment from the United States in Romania, an investment with which generate common interests and would foster even more our partnership. And I'm referring to the Ford company and of course, a common interest like this would make me feel, as a citizen and as a Prime Minister, much more protected by our common interests.

I would like to also mention another initiative which was announced by the President yesterday, which was the creation of an American-Romanian foundation which will set up educational programs and grants for Romanian students. I'm talking about the seed money of \$100 million, which could be—

Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu. One hundred and fifty.

President Bush. One hundred and fifty. Don't short-change it.

Interpreter. —\$150 million, which in time will arrive at \$1 billion investment, which will create—which would be an investment in the future, creating the future—Romanian Ambassadors to United States or the American Ambassadors to Romania—it would be our hope.

Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. We just had a great—we had a good meeting, because we're good friends. All right. Okay, I'll just keep going.

Interpreter. I was actually told that everybody speaks English, so I should not interpret.

President Bush. Okay, fine. I'll speak in Romanian. [Laughter] Anyway, we had a very good meeting, Mr. Prime Minister. Thank you for your time. First of all, I want to congratulate the Government, yourself, for hosting a very successful NATO summit. It's not easy to host as many automobiles, bodyguards, world leaders, hanger-oners as you did. And yet you did it and you organized well. Everybody who came to the summit was most impressed. I really do want to thank you, and I want to thank the people of Bucharest for their patience. I apologize for the inconvenience, but I do think it was a good sign, and it was important for your country to be the host of this important event. And it was a very successful summit.

We had good discussions about a successful bilateral relationship as well. I told the Prime Minister, one reason why capital comes to a country is because people feel comfortable about taking risk. I also congratulated him on these big investments that are coming; it's a good sign. And the people of Romania ought to be—appreciate the fact that the conditions are such that people are willing to invest. And by the way, investment creates jobs, which is also—will have a direct benefit for the people of Romania.

I also congratulated the Prime Minister on having a 16 percent flat tax. I'm a little envious. I would like to have been able to achieve the same objective for our Tax Code. And it was a smart thing to get done, cause I think those kinds of policies will enable the Romanian folks to have a bright future.

We talked about energy; we also talked about visas. There is a real contradiction here that's hard for the people of Romania to understand in that, on the one hand, how can certain people within the EU be treated one way and Romanians be treated another way, when it comes to visas? And I fully understand that contradiction, Mr. Prime Minister. Our Congress passed new law—it frankly wasn't as good as I thought it should be, but nevertheless, it is the law of the land cause I signed it into law.

And we will work with your Government on a couple of matters, one, to figure out why the rejection rate is so high. There needs to be more transparency, and the Prime Minister made it very clear that we have an obli-

gation to explain why certain folks are not getting visas. And we'll do that. And——

Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu. Thank you.

President Bush. ——the other thing is, obviously, we've got law on our books that we need to work with you, to help everybody understand in the process what compliance means.

Overall, the trip here has been great. This is the second time I've come. I didn't have quite the dramatic rainbow scene this time as I did the first time I came, but it's—clearly there's been a lot of progress. The city looks different to me. The spirit is still strong. Freedom has taken hold, and I congratulate you, the Government, and all involved for the progress you've made. Thank you.

Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. at the Victoria Palace. Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu spoke partly in Romanian, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the 40th Anniversary of the Death of Martin Luther King, Jr.

April 4, 2008

Forty years ago today, America was robbed of one of history's most consequential advocates for equality and civil rights. On this day, we mourn the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and we celebrate his powerful and eloquent message of justice and hope.

Dr. King was a man of courage and vision. He understood that love and compassion will always triumph over bitterness and hatred. His words and deeds inspired Americans of all races to confront prejudice and to work to ensure that our country is a land of opportunity for all its men and women.

We have made progress on Dr. King's dream, yet the struggle is not over. Ensuring freedom and equality for all Americans remains one of our most important responsibilities. As we reflect upon Dr. King's life and legacy, we must recommit ourselves to following his lasting example of service to others.

**Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by
President Stjepan Mesic of Croatia in
Zagreb, Croatia**

April 4, 2008

Mr. President and Madam, thank you very much. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much. Also good to meet your wife.

Laura and I are thrilled to be in your beautiful country, Mr. President. We appreciate your gracious hospitality, and we celebrate your invitation to become one of America's closest allies. I—you said you're from a small country. I'm impressed by the big hearts and the big basketball team. *[Laughter]*

We are so proud of our relationship, Mr. President. We share common values. We believe in human rights and human dignity. We believe there's a Creator that has given every man, woman, and child on the face of the Earth the great gift of freedom. We believe markets are capable of unleashing the entrepreneurial spirit of our peoples. We understand that freedom requires sacrifice.

I salute the people of your country for your courage and willingness to help a young democracy in Afghanistan not only thrive but succeed. I appreciate the friends who have stared evil in the face and understand there's a better tomorrow.

And so, Mr. President, I bring the greetings of my country to your beautiful land. With the honor due to a trusted ally, I offer a toast to you and to the valiant people of Croatia.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:04 p.m. at the Pucka Dvorana. In his remarks, he referred to Milka Mesic, wife of President Mesic; and Prime Minister Ivo Sanader of Croatia and his wife, Mirjana Sanader. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Mesic.

**Proclamation 8233—National Tartan
Day, 2008**

April 4, 2008

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Americans of Scottish descent have made enduring contributions to our Nation with their hard work, faith, and values. On National Tartan Day, we celebrate the spirit and character of Scottish Americans and recognize their many contributions to our culture and our way of life.

Scotland and the United States have long shared ties of family and friendship, and many of our country's most cherished customs and ideals first grew to maturity on Scotland's soil. The Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence signed in 1320, embodied the Scots' strong dedication to liberty, and the Scots brought that tradition of freedom with them to the New World. Sons and daughters of many Scottish clans were among the first immigrants to settle in America, and their determination and optimism helped build our Nation's character. Several of our Founding Fathers were of Scottish descent, as have been many Presidents and Justices of the United States Supreme Court. Many Scottish Americans, such as Andrew Carnegie, were great philanthropists, founding and supporting numerous scientific, educational, and civic institutions. From the evocative sounds of the bagpipes to the great sport of golf, the Scots have also left an indelible mark on American culture.

National Tartan Day is an opportunity to celebrate all Americans who claim Scottish ancestry, and we are especially grateful for the service in our Armed Forces of Scottish Americans who have answered the call to protect our Nation.

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 April 6, 2008, as National Tartan Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day by celebrating the continued friendship between the people of

Scotland and the United States and by recognizing the contributions of Scottish Americans to our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of April, 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, 8:34 a.m., April 8, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 9.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

March 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

March 30

In the evening, at Nationals Park, the President and Mrs. Bush visited the Major League Baseball clubhouses of the Washington Nationals and the Atlanta Braves. Later, he threw out the ceremonial first pitch to open the game between the Nationals and the Braves. He and Mrs. Bush then watched the game.

March 31

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Kiev, Ukraine, arriving in the evening. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Hyatt Regency Kiev.

April 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush

met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families. They then traveled to the Presidential Secretariat, where they participated in an arrival ceremony with President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine and his wife, Kateryna Mykhailivna Yushchenko.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in a reception with President Yushchenko and Mrs. Yushchenko. During the reception, he met with Yatseniuk Arseniy Petrovych, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, and Viktor Yanukovych, Leader of the Party of Regions of Ukraine.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Club of Cabinet Ministers, where he met with Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko of Ukraine. Later, he traveled to the Holodomor Memorial, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush, President Yushchenko, and Mrs. Yushchenko. They all then traveled to St. Sophia's Cathedral, where they toured the cathedral and attended a musical performance.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Bucharest, Romania, arriving in the evening.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the ceremony commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising in Warsaw, Poland, on April 15: Michael Chertoff (head of delegation); Victor Ashe; Phyllis Heideman; David Mitzner; and Bill Lowenberg.

April 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania, where, upon arrival at Mihail Kogalniceanu Airport, they participated in an arrival ceremony with President Traian Basescu of Romania and his wife, Maria. They then traveled to the Protocol Villas Neptun-Olimp in Neptun, Romania, arriving in the afternoon.

Later in the afternoon, in the Protocol Villas Neptun-Olimp dining room, the President had a working lunch with President Basescu. Later, he and Mrs. Bush returned

to the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel in Bucharest, Romania.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Cotroceni Palace, where, in the Union Hall, they participated in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit official greeting. He then participated in the North Atlantic Council summit working dinner. Later, he returned to the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard E. Hoagland to be Ambassador to Kazakhstan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey F. Kupfer to be Deputy Secretary of Energy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Elanie C. Duke to be Under Secretary for Management at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brandon Chad Bungard to be General Counsel for the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The President announced his intention to nominate John P. Hewko to be Assistant Secretary (Aviation and International Affairs) at the Department of Transportation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Janice L. Jacobs to be Assistant Secretary (Bureau of Consular Affairs) at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to designate Patrick W. Dunne as Acting Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

April 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to the Palace of Parliament.

In the afternoon, in the Rustic Hall of the Palace of Parliament, the President attended the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council summit working lunch. Later, in the Unirii Hall of the Palace of Parliament, he attended the NATO summit meeting on Afghanistan. He then participated in an official photograph with participants of the NATO summit meeting on Afghanistan.

In the evening, the President returned to the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Athenaeum, where, in the theater, they attended a NATO cultural event. They then traveled to the Athenee Palace Hilton Bucharest Hotel, where they attended the NATO gala dinner.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bartholomew H. Chilton and Scott O'Malia to be Commissioners on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

April 4

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to the Palace of Parliament, where he attended the NATO-Ukraine Commission summit meeting. He then attended the NATO-Russia Council summit meeting.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Zagreb, Croatia. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with President Thabo Mbewelwa Mbeki of South Africa to discuss the situation in Zimbabwe. They then traveled to the Westin Zagreb hotel.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Office of the President, where they participated in an arrival ceremony with President Stjepan Mesic of Croatia and his wife, Milka. He then met with President Mesic. Later they returned to the Westin Zagreb hotel.

The President announced that he has named Patrick S. Aylward as Special Assistant to the President and Director, Office of the Chief of Staff.

The President announced that he has named Amy L. Farrell as Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy at the National Economic Council.

The President announced that he has named John S. Roberts as Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted March 31

Luis Aguilar,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 5, 2010, vice Roel C. Campos, resigned.

Constance S. Barker,
of Alabama, to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2011, vice Cari M. Dominguez, resigned.

Robert Stephen Beecroft,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Victoria Ray Carlson,
of Iowa, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2010 (reappointment).

Lily Fu Claffee,
of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, vice John J. Sullivan.

Chad Colley,
of Florida, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2010 (reappointment).

Kristen Cox,
of Utah, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2009, vice Linda Wetters, term expired.

Tyler D. Duvall,
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, vice Jeffrey Shane, resigned.

Marvin G. Fifield,
of Utah, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2008, vice Graham Hill, term expired.

Marvin G. Fifield,
of Utah, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2011 (reappointment).

John H. Hager,
of Virginia, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2009, vice Robert Davila, term expired.

Michael E. Leiter,
of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, vice John S. Redd, resigned.

Lisa Mattheiss,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2010 (reappointment).

Katherine O. McCary,
of Virginia, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2009, vice Milton Aponte, term expired.

Kameran L. Onley,
of Washington, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior, vice Mark A. Limbaugh.

Anne Rader,
of Virginia, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2010 (reappointment).

Philip Thomas Reeker,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Macedonia.

Miguel R. San Juan,
of Texas, to be U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank for a term of 3 years, vice Hector E. Morales, term expired.

A. Ellen Terpstra,
of New York, to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Richard T. Crowder.

Renee L. Tyree,
of Arizona, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2009, vice Kathleen Martinez, term expired.

John R. Vaughn,
of Florida, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2010 (reappointment).

Christopher R. Wall,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, vice Christopher A. Padilla.

Elisse Walter,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2012, vice Annette L. Nazareth, term expired.

Tony J. Williams,
of Washington, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2009, vice Young Woo Kang, term expired.

Submitted April 2 *

Brandon Chad Bungard,
of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years, vice Colleen Duffy Kiko, resigned.

William J. Burns,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be an Under Secretary of State (Political Affairs), vice R. Nicholas Burns, resigned.

Elaine C. Duke,
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, vice Paul A. Schneider.

John P. Hewko,
of Michigan, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, vice Andrew B. Steinberg.

Richard E. Hoagland,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Janice L. Jacobs,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Bureau of Consular Affairs), vice Maura Ann Harty, resigned.

Jeffrey F. Kupfer,
of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of Energy, vice Jeffrey Clay Sell, resigned.

Alexa E. Posny,
of Kansas, to be a member of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a term expiring November 25, 2011 (reappointment).

Marie L. Yovanovitch,
of Connecticut, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Armenia.

Submitted April 3

Bartholomew H. Chilton,
of Delaware, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring April 13, 2013 (reappointment).

Scott O'Malia,
of Michigan, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring April 13, 2012, vice Reuben Jeffery III, resigned.

* These nominations were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 3.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released March 31

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley

Statement by the Press Secretary on the selection of C. Boyden Gray as Special Envoy for European Union Affairs and Special Envoy for Eurasian Energy

Released April 1

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Excerpts from the President's remarks in Bucharest, Romania, on April 2

Released April 2 *

Transcript of a briefing by a senior administration official on the President's schedule in Romania

** This briefing began on April 2 at 11:50 p.m. and concluded April 3 at 12:17 a.m., when it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary.*

Released April 3

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley

Transcript of a background briefing by senior administration officials

Statement by the Press Secretary on House of Representatives passage of legislation on U.S. leadership against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria

Released April 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by a senior administration official

Fact sheet: Taking Decisive Action To Keep Our Economy Growing

Acts Approved by the President

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.