

reminder of the ongoing threat faced by Pakistan, the United States, and all those who stand against violent extremism. We will assist Pakistan in confronting this threat and bringing the perpetrators to justice. We will fully support the democratically elected Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people as they face enormous challenges economically as well as from terrorism.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia

September 20, 2008

Mr. President, members of your delegation, members of my Cabinet, Members of the United States Senate and United States Congress, honored guests: Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are really pleased you all are here. Our nations share a faith in liberty, a willingness to defend it, and a confidence that freedom will define the future for our region. The American people, Mr. President, are proud to call the Colombian people our friends and our allies.

You, Mr. President, are a strong leader. You and your Government and the Colombian people have shown courage in freedom's cause, by taking on the terrorists and the drug lords. This summer, our Nation was impressed by the daring rescue of 15 hostages, 3 of whom were American citizens. We appreciate your leadership. We are pleased to be your partner in strengthening the rule of law and combating the illegal drug trade and helping victims of violence rebuild their lives and communities.

We're also partners in the spread of prosperity. We have negotiated a fair free trade agreement that will benefit families and businesses in both our nations. And I appreciate your strong advocacy for this agreement. And my sincere hope is that the United States Congress will pass the Colombia free trade agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. President, Laura and I warmly remember our visits to your beautiful country. We were honored to visit a city liberated by the great Simon Bolivar. And in that visit we were honored to be with you and your lovely wife.

And so tonight I want to propose a toast to our friendship, the friendship between our countries. May God bless Colombia, and may God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, former hostages held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); and Lina Maria Moreno de Uribe, wife of President Uribe. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Uribe. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the National Economy

September 22, 2008

Over the weekend, members of my administration and congressional leaders worked on legislation to address the crisis in our Nation's financial markets. They made good headway toward a bill that can pass the House and Senate in a timely manner, and the American people appreciate their efforts.

Obviously, there will be differences over some details, and we will have to work through them. That is an understandable part of the policymaking process. But it would not be understandable if Members of Congress sought to use this emergency legislation to pass unrelated provisions, or to insist on provisions that would undermine the effectiveness of the plan. I appreciate Members of Congress in both parties resisting the urge to do so, and keeping the rescue bill focused on solving the crisis in our financial markets.

Americans are watching to see if Democrats and Republicans, the Congress and the White House, can come together to solve this problem with the urgency it warrants. Indeed, the whole world is watching to see if we can act quickly to shore up our markets and prevent damage to our capital markets, businesses, our housing sector, and retirement accounts.

Failure to act would have broad consequences far beyond Wall Street. It would threaten small-business owners and homeowners on Main Street.

Everyone recognizes that it's not easy to write a bill of this magnitude in a timely manner, and all those who have worked so hard over the weekend and continue this morning deserve the thanks and appreciation of every American. Working together, I am confident we can enact the legislation necessary to prevent lasting damage to our economy and meet the unique challenge facing us today.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

**Remarks During a Meeting With
President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan
in New York City**
September 23, 2008

President Bush. Mr. President, I thank you for coming. And I have really been looking forward to this meeting; after all, Pakistan is a close and important friend.

First of all, I want to express our deepest condolences to the victims of those who died as a result of the terrorist attack in Islamabad. I know that you—your heart went out to the families of those who suffer and so does the collective heart of the American people; we stand with you.

President Zardari. Thank you.

President Bush. Secondly, I got to know you a little bit in an interesting way when I met your children at the Olympics. And it reminded me about the great suffering that they and you have been through with the loss of your beloved wife. And I thank you very much for staying involved in public service to honor her legacy.

Pakistan is an ally, and I look forward to deepening our relationship. We'll be discussing, of course, how to help spread prosperity. We want our friends around the world to be making a good living. We want there to be economic prosperity, and we can work together, and of course, we'll be talking about security. And your words have been very strong about Pakistan's sovereign right and sovereign duty to protect your country, and the United States wants to help.

One of the things I've heard here in my stay thus far in New York, is from world leaders wondering whether or not the United

States has the right plan to deal with this economic crisis. And I've assured them that the plan laid out by Secretary Paulson is a robust plan to deal with a serious problem. And now they're wondering about our Congress, and I've assured them as well that having spoken to the leaders of the Congress from both political parties, there is the desire to get something done quickly.

Now, there's a natural give-and-take when it comes to the legislative process. There are good ideas that need to be listened to in order to get a good bill out that will address the situation. But I'm confident, Mr. President, and as I've told you and other leaders, that there will be a bipartisan bill; that the Republicans and Democrats will come together to get this piece of legislation passed, which is necessary to address the financial situation and provide a rescue plan to make sure that there's some stability in the markets.

Anyway, Mr. President, thank you for coming.

President Zardari. Thank you. Thank you for your kind words; thank you for your thoughts. As always, you prove to the world that your heart is in there for us Pakistanis; we respect your feelings, we respect the American ideals. And we bring to this the whole concept of your promise to the world of bringing democracy to Pakistan. Democracy has come full circle, and it's been the help of all the friends around the world; and we are thankful to the world for helping democracy.

And democracy is the answer. We will solve all the problems. We have a situation; we have issues; we've got problems. But we will solve them, and we will rise to the occasion. That's what my wife's legacy is all about. That's what democracy is all about, to take difficult decisions and do the right thing for the people of our country and our two great nations. We should come together in this hard time, and we will share the burden and the responsibility with the world.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister and Opposition Leader Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, who was killed in a