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to gather with leaders of the Jewish community to celebrate our final Hanukkah here in the White House.

I want to thank our Attorney General for joining us. General, I appreciate you and Susan joining us. I am proud to be here with one of America's great United States Senators, Joe Lieberman—[*applause*]—his greatness made possible by his wife Hadassah, I might add. [*Laughter*] And one of the young leaders of the United States Congress, Eric Cantor, and his wife Diana. And we're proud to be here with Kol Zimra as well, who will perform later.

The story of Hanukkah recalls the miraculous victory of a small band of patriots against tyranny and the oil that burned for eight nights. Through centuries of exile and persecution, Jews have lit the menorah. Each year, they behold its glow with faith in the power of God and love for His greatest gift, freedom.

This Hanukkah we celebrate another miraculous victory, the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. When President Harry Truman led the world in recognizing Israel in May of 1948, many wondered whether the small nation could possibly survive. Yet from the first days of independence, the people of Israel defied dire predictions. With determination and hard work, they turned a rocky desert into fertile soil. They built a thriving democracy, a strong economy, and one of the mightiest military forces on Earth. Like the Maccabees, Israel has defended itself bravely against enemies seeking its destruction. And today, Israel is a light unto the nations and one of America's closest friends.

This evening we have the great privilege of celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary and Hanukkah in a very special way. Thanks to the generosity of the Truman Library, we are fortunate to light the menorah presented to President Truman in 1951 as a symbol of friendship by Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion.

A decade after President Truman received this gift, he visited Prime Minister Ben-Gurion for one of the last times. As they parted, Ben-Gurion told the President that as a foreigner he could not judge President Truman's place in American history, but the President's courageous decision to recognize the new State of Israel gave him an immortal place in Jewish history. Those words filled the President's eyes with uncharacteristic tears. And later, Ben-Gurion would say he rarely had seen somebody so moved.

And so tonight I'm deeply moved to welcome the grandsons of these two great men—Clifton Truman Daniel and Yariv Ben-Eliezer—to light the Truman menorah together.

Laura and I wish all the people of Jewish faith a happy Hanukkah and many joyous Hanukkahs in the years ahead. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:30 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jalal Talabani of Iraq; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; Susan Mukasey, wife of Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey; and entertainers Kol Zimra. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador

December 16, 2008

President Bush. Mr. President, *benvenido de nuevo*. I am honored to have you back. I appreciate your friendship, and I appreciate your strong leadership for the people of our close ally, El Salvador.

We've had a very good discussion. First, I want to thank you for your support of freedom in Iraq. You and—have been steadfast in recognizing that freedom is the way to help build lasting peace.

I appreciate very much the fact that your country is a vibrant democracy. You've been steadfast in your support for your—the right of your people to express themselves in a free society, and I applaud you for that strength.

I want to thank you very much for investing in your people. You're a—we've got a partnership through the Millennium Challenge Corporation. And part of your commitment was honest government and the investment in the health and education of your people. And you've honored that agreement. I thank you very much for understanding that the benefits of trade are good for your people

and our people as well. And you're a very strong advocate of CAFTA, which is working very well.

And finally, you've been very strong when it comes to helping interdict the flow of drugs. I explained to the President that since 2001, drug use in the United States amongst teenagers has declined by 25 percent. And the reason I said that is because in order to affect the flow of drugs there must be a comprehensive approach. First of all, we got to—we in the United States must reduce demand. But it also requires a strong cooperative spirit to interdict supply. And you have been very strong in that.

And so I thank you. It's been a pleasure to work with you. You may have heard that I'm about to retire. And as I head toward the great State of Texas, I will have very fond memories of our time together, and the strength of our friendship and of your leadership.

So welcome.

President Saca. *Muchas gracias.*

President Bush. *Si.*

President Saca. Thank you so much. I also thank President Bush. I think that we have got a very fruitful relationship and one that is very concerned for our people. I think that El Salvador is a good example of a country that moved from war to peace. And we've always had the contribution of the United States in all of the stages of this peace.

I always tell President Bush that free trade was so important, as well as the immigration issue for our people. And all these issues have been worked out, especially regarding cooperation with regards to the combat against drugs. I have confirmed President Bush that El Salvador is going to renew the FOL that we have at the Pacific coast. And that has allowed us to capture a lot of drug traffickers and seize a lot of drugs also for the Pacific coast.

So a mid-income country like El Salvador knows perfectly well that the path towards prosperity is effort and hard work and freedom. And this is something that Salvadorans practice on a daily basis. We have worked hand in hand with ILEA. And ILEA is the place where our judges and our prosecutors are being trained, and it is something that we're doing together with the United States of America.

With regards to the Millennium account, we have been very successful. We're working very fast. We're going to build a highway, a 300-kilometer-long highway in the northern part of the country. And at the same time, we're going to develop the rural areas along that highway. And all this has been done hand in hand with the United States.

I wish you the best of luck in your new life. I was just in Dallas recently, because I went to promote the TPS for our people. And everybody knew there that President Bush was going to move to Dallas. [*Laughter*]

You are leaving on January 20th. And I leave on the 1st of June.

President Bush. *Si.* [*Laughter*]

President Saca. So I hope that I can go and visit you and talk to you——

President Bush. *Por cierto—por cierto.*

President Saca. *Lo damos por cierto.*

President Bush. *Si.*

President Saca. Okay. President Bush has been a strong advocate of freedom. And I think that the United States has much to thank President Bush, especially the fact that the U.S. has not been attacked again by the terrorist groups. This is something quite intangible, because you cannot touch it, you cannot feel it, until that, unfortunately, something like that would happen again.

You can always count with the support of El Salvador on these issues, Mr. President, and the United States in general, the new President, because the historical relationship between the United States of America and El Salvador is a relationship of shared values, and we will continue to share in this friendship strongly, as it is now.

Thank you so much.

President Bush Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Saca referred to President-elect Barack Obama; FOL, the U.S. Military Forward Operating Location in Comalapa, El Salvador; ILEA, the Department of Homeland Security's International Law Enforcement Acadamies; and TPS, temporary protected immigration status. President Saca spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Reporting on the Deployments of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces Around the World

December 16, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. combat-equipped Armed Forces around the world. This supplemental report covers operations in support of the war on terror and in Kosovo.

THE WAR ON TERROR

Since September 24, 2001, I have reported, consistent with Public Law 107–40 and the War Powers Resolution, on the combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters, which began on October 7, 2001, and the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat-support forces to a number of locations in the Central, Pacific, European, Southern, and Africa Command areas of operation in support of those operations and of other operations in our war on terror.

I will direct additional measures as necessary in the exercise of the right of the United States to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short-notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States.

United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, continue to conduct the U.S. campaign to pursue al-Qaida terrorists and to eliminate support to al-Qaida. These operations have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qaida's training capabilities. United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, ended the Taliban regime and are actively pursuing and engaging remnant al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. The total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is approximately 31,000, of which approximately 13,000 are assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council authorized ISAF in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, and has reaffirmed its authorization since that time, most recently for a 12-month period from October 13, 2008, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1833 of September 22, 2008. The mission of ISAF under NATO command is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in creating a safe and secure environment that allows for continued reconstruction and the exercise and extension of Afghan authority. Currently, more than 40 nations contribute to ISAF, including all 26 NATO Allies.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat-support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations since January 2002 continue to conduct secure detention operations for the enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

The U.N. Security Council authorized a Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq under unified command in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003, and reaffirmed its authorization in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1637 of November 8, 2005, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1723 of November 28, 2006, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1790 of December 18, 2007, set to expire on December 31, 2008. Under Resolutions 1546, 1637, 1723, and 1790, the mission of the MNF is to contribute to security and stability in Iraq. These contributions have included, but have not been limited to, assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces, supporting the development of Iraq's political institutions, improving local governance, enhancing ministerial capacity, and providing critical humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the Iraqis. The U.S. contribution to the MNF fluctuates over time depending on the conditions in theater as determined