

of these hopes. In one short remarkable year, the Winter Garden has been reborn. The speed and success of this rebuilding effort is a testament to the optimism and determination of the people of New York and the people of the world. More than one million pounds of marble for this building was quarried in Italy and Spain. As one quarry official stated, "We didn't consider this a job. It was a duty."

Now the world is called to urgent duties. We're called upon to reaffirm great founding purposes of the United Nations, universal standards of human dignity, and a global system of peace and security. We're

called to confront great challenges to these ideals, from poverty and disease to terror and the aggression of tyrants.

By our determination, by our faith, by cooperation, we can and we will meet these tests. And by our efforts, we will lift the lives of people on every continent.

Thank you all for coming tonight. May God bless your countries, and may God bring peace to the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 p.m. in the Winter Garden at the World Financial Center.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Central African Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in New York City *September 13, 2002*

The President. Thank you all for coming. First, I'm honored to be able to meet with my colleagues from Central Africa. The Secretary of State and I look forward to a very frank and constructive dialog about how to continue our common pursuit against terror and how we will work together to promote prosperity. I look forward to a constructive dialog. So thank you all for coming.

Before we begin our discussion, let me answer a few questions. Are the interpreters working right now? They are? Yours isn't working, okay. Before we begin our dialog, I'm going to take three questions from the American press corps, starting with Mr. Fournier [Ron Fournier], who writes for the Associated Press.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq

Q. Thank you, sir. Knowing what you know about Saddam, what are the odds that he's going to meet all your demands and avoid confrontation?

The President. I am highly doubtful that he'll meet our demands. I hope he does,

but I'm highly doubtful. The reason I'm doubtful is, he's had 11 years to meet the demands. For 11 long years he has basically told the United Nations and the world he doesn't care. And so, therefore, I am doubtful but, nevertheless, made the decision to move forward to work with the world community. And I hope the world community knows that we're extremely serious about what I said yesterday and we expect a quick resolution to the issue. And that's starting with quick action on a resolution.

Randy [Randy Mikkelsen, Reuters].

United Nations Resolution

Q. Yes, sir, how soon are you expecting the resolution from the United Nations? In a week, month, days?

The President. As soon as possible.

Q. And how—what kind of deadline would you perceive within that resolution?

The President. Well, there will be deadlines within the resolution. Our chief negotiator for the United States, our Secretary of State, understands that we must have

deadlines. And we're talking days and weeks, not months and years. And that's essential for the security of the world. This man has had 11 years to comply. For 11 long years, he's ignored world opinion, and he's put the credibility of the United Nations on line.

As I said yesterday, we'll determine—how we deal with this problem will help determine the fate of a multilateral body, which has been unilaterally ignored by Saddam Hussein. Will this body be able to keep the peace and deal with the true threats, including threats to security in Central Africa and other parts of the world, or will it be irrelevant?

Judy Keen [USA Today].

Timing of Congressional Action/President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Are you concerned that Democrats in Congress still don't want a vote there until after U.N. action? And secondly, have you spoken with President Putin since your speech yesterday?

The President. I have not spoken to President Putin since my speech. I did speak to his Foreign Minister, as did Colin Powell. I'll speak to President Putin, I'm confident, soon. I'll have—I think we've got a scheduled phone call, actually.

And the first part of the question was, Democrats waiting for the U.N. to act? I can't imagine an elected United States—elected Member of the United States Senate or House of Representatives saying, "I think I'm going to wait for the United Na-

tions to make a decision." It seems like to me that if you're representing the United States, you ought to be making a decision on what's best for the United States. If I were running for office, I'm not sure how I'd explain to the American people—say, "Vote for me, and, oh, by the way, on a matter of national security, I think I'm going to wait for somebody else to act."

And so I—we'll see. My answer to the Congress is, they need to debate this issue and consult with us and get the issue done as quickly as possible. It's in our national interests that we do so. I don't imagine Saddam Hussein sitting around, saying, "Gosh, I think I'm going to wait for some resolution or not." He's a threat, and we must deal with it as quickly as possible.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:15 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Minister Igor Sergeyevich Ivanov of Russia. The following leaders participated in the meeting: President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi; President Paul Biya of Cameroon; President Ange-Felix Patasse of the Central African Republic; President Idriss Deby of Chad; President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea; President El Hadj Omar Bongo of Gabon; President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo; President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; and President Fradique De Menezes of Sao Tome and Principe.

The President's Radio Address
September 14, 2002

Good morning. Today I'm meeting with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi about the growing danger posed by Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and the unique

opportunity the U.N. Security Council has to confront it.

I appreciate the Prime Minister's public support for effective international action to