

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

deal with this danger. The Italian Prime Minister joins other concerned world leaders who have called on the world to act, among them Prime Minister Blair of Great Britain, Prime Minister Aznar of Spain, President Kwasniewski of Poland.

These leaders have reached the same conclusion I have, that Saddam Hussein has made the case against himself. He has broken every pledge he made to the United Nations and the world since his invasion of Kuwait was rolled back in 1991. Sixteen times the United Nations Security Council has passed resolutions designed to ensure that Iraq does not pose a threat to international peace and security. Saddam Hussein has violated every one of these 16 resolutions, not once but many times.

Saddam Hussein's regime continues to support terrorist groups and to oppress its civilian population. It refuses to account for missing Gulf war personnel or to end illicit trade outside the U.N.'s oil-for-food program. And although the regime agreed in 1991 to destroy and stop developing all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, it has broken every aspect of this fundamental pledge.

Today, this regime likely maintains stockpiles of chemical and biological agents and is improving and expanding facilities capable of producing chemical and biological weapons. Today, Saddam Hussein has the scientists and infrastructure for a nuclear weapons program and has illicitly sought to purchase the equipment needed to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should his regime acquire fissile material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year.

The former head of the U.N. team investigating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program, Richard Butler, reached this conclusion after years of experience: "The fundamental problem with Iraq remains the nature of the regime itself. Saddam Hussein is a homicidal dictator who is addicted to weapons of mass destruction."

By supporting terrorist groups, repressing its own people, and pursuing weapons of mass destruction in defiance of a decade of U.N. resolutions, Saddam Hussein's regime has proven itself a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And this is a risk we must not take.

Saddam Hussein's defiance has confronted the United Nations with a difficult and defining moment: Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purposes of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?

As the United Nations prepares an effective response to Iraq's defense, I also welcome next week's congressional hearings on the threats Saddam Hussein's brutal regime poses to our country and the entire world. Congress must make it unmistakably clear that when it comes to confronting the growing danger posed by Iraq's efforts to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction, the status quo is totally unacceptable.

The issue is straightforward: We must choose between a world of fear or a world of progress. We must stand up for our security and for the demands of human dignity. By heritage and choice, the United States will make that stand. The world community must do so as well.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:05 p.m. on September 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; and President Aleksander

Kwasniewski of Poland. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and an Exchange With Reporters at Camp David, Maryland
September 14, 2002

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome Silvio Berlusconi, the Prime Minister of Italy, to Camp David. I've been looking forward to having a chance to spend some quality time in a quality place. We're going to have a good visit, meeting about our common interests. And we'll have a good lunch with my wife. And I've invited my brother and my sister; I want my family members to meet a good friend, a strong leader.

We're making progress in the war against terror. I tell the American people all the time that we're doing everything we can to protect our homeland by hunting down killers, one person at a time. And yesterday, thanks to the efforts of our folks and people in Pakistan, we captured one of the planners and organizers of the September the 11th attack that murdered thousands of people, including Italians. One by one, we're hunting the killers down. We are relentless. We are strong, and we're not going to stop.

Secondly, I had a chance to speak to the United Nations to talk about another threat that face—we face—that we face, all of us face, in the civilized world, and that is a threat of weapons of mass destructions in the hands of leaders who disregard human liberty, that do not believe in freedom—a leader, in this case, who's poisoned his own people, poisoned his neighbors, attacked in his neighborhood, and refuses—refuses—to comply with United Nations' regulations, as a matter of fact, defies the United Nations. And we're making progress.

And so, Mr. Prime Minister, you're here at an important time. I look forward to talking with you, and thank you for coming.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you. Well, first of all, I'm glad to be here with President Bush, with whom I have a very deep friendship. I'm here as the Prime Minister of a country which is a loyal and faithful ally of the United States of America.

The United States is a country to which my people bears a deep gratitude because it owes to the generosity of this great democracy its freedom and its prosperity. We'll never forget the fact that about a half a century ago, through the sacrifice of so many young Americans, Italy and Europe were saved from totalitarianism. I'm here as a sincere ally, and I know that we, as an ally, we're respected, and we heard. So I'll be able to speak as a friend, speak truthfully, in order to find, as usual, common solutions and common positions.

President Bush. Thank you.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. I would like to add one more thing.

President Bush. Sure.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. I consider the flag of the United States is not only a flag of a country but is a universal message of freedom and democracy.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

His English is very good. [*Laughter*]

Here's what we're going to do. I'm going to call upon an American reporter. Silvio will call upon an Italian reporter. I then will call upon an American reporter. Silvio