

he referred to Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A portion of these remarks could

not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Remarks at the North Atlantic Council Summit in Prague November 21, 2002

America is very pleased by today's decision. We believe it strengthens our Nation's most important alliance, NATO. By welcoming seven members, we will not only add to our military capabilities; we will refresh the spirit of this great democratic Alliance.

We believe today's decision reaffirms our commitment to freedom and our commitment to a Europe which is whole and free and at peace.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. at the Prague Congress Center.

## Remarks Following Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia and an Exchange With Reporters in St. Petersburg, Russia November 22, 2002

*President Putin.* Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. In your presence may I once again cordially welcome the President of the United States and his team to Russia.

We are very pleased that Mr. President accepted our invitation. And let me say that our conversations—and this is exactly the way I'd like to quote this meeting—our conversation on the whole range of our bilateral issues and our cooperation in the international arena have been very productive and very, very frank.

And we discussed practically everything between the sky and the Earth. We discussed our cooperation in the energy sector, our energy dialog. We discussed our cooperation in the high technology sector. We also—[inaudible]—the problem of NATO expansion and the development of relations between Russia and NATO. And of course, we also addressed the problem of terrorism. And of course, we also dis-

cussed the prospects for our cooperation on the matters of strategic stability.

I think that Mr. President will agree with me—and he'll have an opportunity to say what he thinks on this—but I think he'll agree with me that our meeting, in this point a very frank meeting, without prepared statements, has been very productive and has been very fruitful.

*President Bush.* Yes, it has. I consider Vladimir Putin one of my good friends.

Are you going to translate?

Like other good friends I've had throughout my life, we don't agree 100 percent of the time. But we always agree to discuss things in a frank and—in a frank way.

Every time I come to St. Petersburg, he keeps showing me more and more beautiful rooms. So I'm coming back next May. I always enjoy our conversations.

I have just come from NATO. My visit with Vladimir was my first stop after Prague. The mood of the NATO countries is this: Russia is our friend; we've got a