

**Statement on Japan's Announcement of Reconstruction Aid to Iraq**  
*October 15, 2003*

I welcome Japan's announcement that it will provide \$1.5 billion toward immediate reconstruction needs in Iraq. I applaud this bold step, which will help mobilize international support for efforts to build a stable, peaceful, and democratic Iraq. Japan recognizes that this effort is critical to security and peace not only in Iraq and the Middle East but also for Japan and throughout the world. Japan's own history shows the power of international coopera-

tion to help a great people build democracy and prosperity and become a beacon of freedom that inspires all nations.

I also commend Japan's announcement that it is working on a larger aid package in preparation for the October 23–24 Madrid Donor's Conference. We look forward to working with Japan and other countries to make the Madrid Conference a success for the people of Iraq.

**Statement on the Terrorist Attack on Americans in the Gaza Strip**  
*October 15, 2003*

I condemn in the strongest terms the vicious act of terrorism directed against Americans in Gaza today. We are working closely with the appropriate officials to bring the terrorists to justice.

Palestinian authorities should have acted long ago to fight terror in all its forms. The failure to create effective Palestinian security forces dedicated to fighting terror continues to cost lives. There must be an empowered Prime Minister who controls all Palestinian security forces, reforms that continue to be blocked by Yasser Arafat. The failure to undertake these reforms and dismantle the terrorist organizations constitutes the greatest obstacle to achieving the Palestinian people's dream of statehood.

The Americans who were attacked today were pursuing a vision for a better future for the Palestinian people. The U.S. Embassy officials traveling in Gaza were there to interview young Palestinian candidates seeking Fulbright scholarships to study in the United States. This is another example of how the terrorists are enemies of progress and opportunity for the Palestinian people.

On behalf of the American people, I send my heartfelt condolences to the families of the brave Americans who were killed and injured serving our country and its ideals.

**Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Riverside, California**  
*October 15, 2003*

Thanks for the warm welcome. It's nice to be back in Riverside, California. I appreciate your hospitality. I appreciate your

friendship, and thank you for your strong support. I'm proud to have it.

I understand there's been a couple of changes here in California since I was last