

could not be stamped out at Robben Island prison. It was seen in the darkness here at Goree Island, where no chain could bind the soul. This untamed fire of justice continues to burn in the affairs of man, and it lights the way before us.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:47 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and his wife, Viviane.

## Remarks to U.S. Embassy Personnel in Dakar *July 8, 2003*

I thank you all very much for coming out to say hello. Laura and I are honored to be here with you all. I'm also, as you can see, traveling with quite distinguished company; our great Secretary of State Colin Powell is with us as well. I want to thank Ambassador Roth and his wife, Carol, for their service to our country.

I'm here to thank our fellow citizens who are serving a great land. Thank you for your dedication and your love of country. I want to thank the foreign nationals who are helping our fellow citizens make sure the Embassy runs so well.

This is an historic trip—oh, there's the Ambassador. But we are so honored to start our trip to this continent here in Senegal. I had the opportunity to go out to Goree Island and talk about what slavery meant to America. It's very interesting when you think about it, the slaves who left here to go to America, because of their steadfast—and their religion and their belief in freedom, helped change America. America is what it is today because of what went on

in the past. Yet when I looked out over the sea, it reminded me that we've always got to keep history in mind. And one of the things that we've always got to know about America is that we love freedom, that we love people to be free, that freedom is God's gift to each and every individual. That's what we believe in our country.

I'm here to spread that message of freedom and peace. Where we see suffering, America will act. Where we find the hungry, we will act. We're here not only on a mission of mercy; we're also here on a mission of alliance. And I want to thank you all for helping make that come true.

May God bless you all. And may God continue to bless Senegal and America. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1 p.m. at Leopold Sedar Senghor International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Senegal Richard Allan Roth and his wife, Carol.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill *July 8, 2003*

I commend the House for passing the Department of Defense Appropriations bill. The House action will help strengthen and

transform our military to keep America safe from the threats of this new era. The bill also continues my long-term commitment

to improving the quality of life for our troops and their families through higher pay and good benefits. I am pleased the House has acted quickly and in a fiscally

responsible manner, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Congress to ensure that we have the resources necessary to support our troops.

## The President's News Conference With President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa in Pretoria, South Africa

July 9, 2003

*President Mbeki.* Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome. I'm very pleased indeed to welcome President Bush and his delegation, Mrs. Bush, and young Barbara. We are very pleased indeed, Mr. President, that you were able to come. It's very important for us because of the importance of the United States to our future and the United States to the future of our continent.

We've had very good discussions with the President, able to cover quite a wide field. We're very pleased with the development of the bilateral relations, strong economic links, growing all the time. Continued attention by the U.S. corporate world on South Africa is very critically important for us. AGOA has had a very big impact in terms of the development of our economy, and we continue to work on all of these matters.

It also gave us a chance to convey our thanks to the President for the support with regards to meeting the African continental challenges. That includes questions of peace and security, the NEPAD processes, again, very important for the future of our continent. That, of course, also gave an opportunity to discuss some of the specific areas of conflict around the continent.

I must say, President, that at the end of these discussions, we, all of us, feel enormously strengthened by your very, very firm and clear commitment to assist us to meet the challenges that we've got to meet domestically and on the African Continent. And therefore, President, thank you very

much indeed for coming. We—the visit will certainly result in strengthened bilateral relations and strengthened cooperation to meet these other challenges that we face together.

But welcome, President.

*President Bush.* Mr. President, thanks. Gosh, we're honored to be here. Thank you for your wonderful hospitality. Thank Mrs. Mbeki as well for her gracious hospitality. It's a pleasure to be in South Africa.

Your Nation's recent history is a great story of courage and persistence in the pursuit of justice. This is a country that threw off oppression and is now the force of freedom and stability and a force for progress throughout the continent of Africa.

I appreciate our strong relationship, and it is a vital relationship. And Mr. President, I want to thank you very much for working hard to make it a vital and strong relationship. We've met quite a few times in the recent past, and every time we've met, I've—I feel refreshed and appreciate very much your advice and counsel and your leadership.

I appreciate the President's dedication to openness and accountability. He is advancing these principles in the New Partnership for African Development, the leader in that effort. The President and I believe that the partnership can help extend democracy and free markets and transparency across the continent of Africa. President Mbeki has shown great leadership in this initiative, and our country will support the leaders who accept the principles of reform, and we'll