

Remarks Following Discussions With Religious Leaders in Istanbul, Turkey *June 27, 2004*

All right. It has been my honor to welcome these very important leaders of different faiths to this dialog. They represent the very best of Turkey, which is a country that is secular in politics and strong in its faith. And we've had a wonderful discussion. I'm so honored that these leaders would take time and share their thoughts with me. And I welcome them, and I thank

them for being so faithful to the Almighty God.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:55 p.m. at the Hilton Istanbul. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With Secretary General Jakob Gijsbert “Jaap” de Hoop Scheffer of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and an Exchange With Reporters in Istanbul *June 27, 2004*

President Bush. This man is doing a great job, and we're proud to call him friend. He believes in freedom and peace. And I really appreciate what you've done, sir.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Thank you. It's a challenge, but NATO is worth it.

President Bush. It is worth it.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. NATO is worth it, and the transatlantic relationship is worth it, more than just in words but all in deeds.

President Bush. Right. I was hoping to change the mission of NATO so it meets the threats of the 21st century, and we're going to work together to help make sure NATO is configured militarily to meet the threats of the 21st century as well. But you're the right man for the job, and we're honored you took it. I really appreciate working with you.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. We're defending values, and values never

come out. And I think they should be defended every single day and every single hour. We see examples of that everywhere around that NATO is—it's about values, has always been about values, and it's still about values. But Turkey has changed. We have terrorism everywhere. There's fights everywhere, be it here in this city, be it in New York, Uzbekistan, Mombasa, Yemen, you name it. This Alliance has to participate in fighting it first and winning it.

President Bush. Thank you.

Kidnaping of Turks

Q. Does the kidnaping of the Turks cast a pall over this meeting?

[*President Bush responded to the question by shaking his head to indicate no.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:04 p.m. at the Hilton Istanbul. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.