

left in mass graves. Throughout the past year, Americans have assisted the Iraqi people in establishing institutions to ensure accountability so that such acts do not occur again and to help victims recover.

Despite international efforts to protect human rights around the world, repressive regimes continue to victimize people through torture. The victims often feel forgotten, but we will not forget them. America supports accountability and treatment centers for torture victims. We contribute to the U.N. Fund for the Victims of Torture and support the work of nongovernmental organizations to end torture and assist the victims. We also provide protection, counseling, and where necessary and pos-

sible, relocation in the United States. We stand with the victims to seek their healing and recovery and urge all nations to join us in these efforts to restore the dignity of every person affected by torture.

These times of increasing terror challenge the world. Terror organizations challenge our comfort and our principles. The United States will continue to take seriously the need to question terrorists who have information that can save lives. But we will not compromise the rule of law or the values and principles that make us strong. Torture is wrong no matter where it occurs, and the United States will continue to lead the fight to eliminate it everywhere.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey in Ankara, Turkey

June 27, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. You're right, this is my first trip to your beautiful country as President. It also happens to be my first trip to your beautiful country ever, and we're honored to be here. We appreciate the hospitality of the Turkish people.

We look forward to meaningful discussions on a variety of subjects, bilateral relations, how we can strengthen NATO. I would remind the people of this good country that I believe you ought to be given a date by the EU for your eventual acceptance into the EU. I also look forward to working with you on matters regarding the neighborhood, Iraq and elsewhere. I appreciate so very much the example your

country has set on how to be a Muslim country and, at the same time, a country which embraces democracy and rule of law and freedom.

And so I'm so grateful for your invitation. Thank you very much for it, and I look forward to a fruitful discussion with you and with our NATO partners.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:40 a.m. at the Prime Minister's residence. Prior to the President's remarks, Prime Minister Erdogan spoke in Turkish, and no translation was provided. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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.