

Joint Statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States of America

April 25, 2005

April 25, 2005, marks the 60th anniversary of the meeting of Soviet and U.S. troops at the River Elbe.

Our nations will always remember the handshake that made history at the Elbe, which became one of the most vivid symbols that our countries were comrades-in-arms in fighting together against Nazi tyranny, oppression, and aggression. We admire the courage and gallant deeds of the soldiers from the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. We will never forget their sacrifice for our common victory.

The past 60 years have witnessed reconciliation in Europe, the overcoming of the Cold War legacy, the fall of barriers that divided peoples and nations, the growth of prosperity, and the advancement of freedom and democracy.

In the new century, new threats to the security of our countries have arisen, including terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But there are also increased opportunities for building a lasting peace based on law and the common values of freedom and democracy. While Russia and the United States are building a closer partnership, the meeting at the Elbe reminds us of the enormous advantages that we can provide for both our countries and for the rest of the world when we are united in dealing with global challenges and take advantage of the opportunities before us for progress and cooperation.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia

April 25, 2005

Sixty years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's founder King Abdulaziz Al Saud held a historic meeting upon a sturdy ship at the Great Bitter Lake in the Suez Canal. In six hours President Bush's predecessor and the Crown Prince's father established a strong personal bond that set the tone for decades of close relations between our two nations.

Today, we renewed our personal friendship and that between our nations. In our meeting we agreed that momentous changes in the world call on us to forge a new relationship between our two countries—a strengthened partnership that

builds on our past partnership, meets today's challenges, and embraces the opportunities our nations will face in the next sixty years.

Our friendship begins with the recognition that our nations have proud and very distinct histories.

The United States respects Saudi Arabia as the birthplace of Islam, one of the world's great religions, and as the symbolic center of the Islamic faith as custodian of Islam's two holy places in Makkah and Madina. Saudi Arabia reiterates its call on all those who teach and propagate the Islamic faith to adhere strictly to the Islamic message of peace, moderation, and

tolerance and reject that which deviates from those principles. Both countries agree that this message of peace, moderation, and tolerance must extend to those of all faiths and practices. The two nations reaffirm the principles agreed to during the international conference on counterterrorism hosted by the Kingdom in February 2005. These principles were enshrined in the "Riyadh Declaration" which calls for, "fostering values of understanding, tolerance, dialogue, co-existence, and the rapprochement between cultures . . . [and] for fighting any form of thinking that promotes hatred, incites violence, and condones terrorist crimes which can by no means be accepted by any religion or law."

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recognizes the principle of freedom upon which the United States was founded, including the freedoms enshrined under the first amendment of the United States Constitution. The Kingdom appreciates the United States' historic role in working to end colonialism and imperialism and promoting the right of self-determination.

While the United States considers that nations will create institutions that reflect the history, culture, and traditions of their societies, it does not seek to impose its own style of government on the government and people of Saudi Arabia. The United States applauds the recently held elections in the Kingdom for representatives to municipal councils and looks for even wider participation in accordance with the Kingdom's reform program.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States are close partners in many important endeavors. We welcome the renewed determination of Saudi Arabia to pursue economic reform and its quest to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). We will work together as partners to complete our negotiations and with other WTO members in Geneva with the aim of welcoming Saudi Arabia into the WTO before the end of 2005.

Both nations pledge to continue their cooperation so that the oil supply from Saudi Arabia will be available and secure. The United States appreciates Saudi Arabia's strong commitment to accelerating investment and expanding its production capacity to help provide stability and adequately supply the market.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States commit to actively help the Iraqi people realize their aspirations to build a secure, sovereign, prosperous, and unified nation at peace with its neighbors and where Iraqis of all religions and ethnic groups are free to participate in its institutions. Both nations call on the international community to support Iraq's political and economic development. Both nations urge neighboring states not to interfere in Iraq's internal political affairs.

Both our nations have witnessed the horror of terrorism on our homelands by violent individuals and groups who indiscriminately kill people of all faiths and nationalities in order to further their extremist agenda. Both our nations assert our determination to continue to improve upon our close cooperation to combat terrorism and to choke off resources intended for them and their support networks. We honor the memory of the victims of terrorism—and those who have lost their lives fighting terrorists—and pledge to work together until terrorism no longer threatens our nations and the entire world.

The United States and Saudi Arabia continue to support efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and of the technology and materiel needed to develop and build nuclear weapons. Efforts to develop and acquire such weapons run contrary to efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.

The United States and Saudi Arabia support UN Security Council Resolution 1559

and, accordingly, take note of Syria's decision to withdraw all its troops and intelligence personnel from Lebanon. Both nations welcome a provisional Lebanese government and look forward to free and fair elections unburdened by foreign interference or intimidation.

With regard to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia desire a just, negotiated settlement wherein two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace and security. We will continue our efforts to achieve this objective, and reiterate our support for the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to bring democracy, peace, and prosperity to all Palestinians. The United States thanks Crown Prince Abdullah for his bold initiative—adopted unanimously by the Arab Summit in 2002—that seeks to encourage an Israel-Palestinian and Israel-Arab peace. We believe that an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank will be a significant step forward toward implementation of the Road Map. It is our firm conviction that resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will remove a major source of tension and contribute to stability and progress in the region.

Finally, the United States and Saudi Arabia agree that our future relations must rest on a foundation of broad cooperation. We must work to expand dialogue, understanding, and interactions between our citizens. This will include programs designed to (1) increase the number of young Saudi students to travel and study in the United States; (2) increase our military exchange programs so that more Saudi officers visit the United States for military education and training; and (3) increase the number of Americans traveling to work and study in the Kingdom. The United States recognizes we must exert great efforts to overcome obstacles facing Saudi businessmen and students who wish to enter the United States and we pledge to our Saudi friends that we will take on this effort. A high-level joint committee has been established to be headed by the Saudi Foreign Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State that will deal with strategic issues of vital importance to the two countries.

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Remarks in a Discussion on Strengthening Social Security in Galveston, Texas

April 26, 2005

The President. Thank you all for coming. It is nice to be home. I want to thank the mayor for being here. Lyda Ann Thomas greeted me coming in. I said, "Do you still have Splash Day?" [*Laughter*] You have to be a baby boomer to know what I'm talking about. [*Laughter*] I'm not saying whether I came or not on Splash Day. I'm just saying, "Do you have Splash Day?" [*Laughter*]

It's great to be back in Galveston. What a cool city. Thanks for having me, and thank you all for giving me a chance to come and talk about Social Security. I've got some things I want to say before we get there, and as you can tell, I'm joined by some of our citizens who are willing to discuss some interesting ideas when it comes to making sure the safety net of Social Security is available for younger generations of Americans.