

country, we have worked with that institute to teach trainers—teach teachers how to teach, in the knowledge that when they leave the institute, they'll then go to their village.

It's kind of this cascading movement of skill so that people can fulfill their compassion, fulfill their dreams about a more literate Afghanistan. This young democracy will survive. And one of the reasons it will survive is because of the committed effort by a lot of folks, not just the United States but by people around the world, to help the brave educational entrepreneurs that recognize hope and peace come about as a result of education.

We—a lot of times you hear a lot of words—people are pretty good talkers in this society of ours. People step up and make promises and, kind of, flowery statements. I want it to be said that our Government is doing more than just talking, that our Government is willing to act. We've doubled the development assistance since I've been the President. We have set forth what's called the Millennium Challenge Account. We said we were going to help people, particularly those who fight corruption, those who believe in markets, but equally important, those who invest in the education and health of their citizens.

We believe strongly that this world must confront the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and believe that to whom much is given, much is required in order to solve disease and poverty—a lot of it brought about because—a lot of that poverty brought about because of illiteracy.

And so one thing I'd like for you to take away from today is, one, we're committed. We believe that the United States of America must not isolate ourselves from the problems of the world. We believe we have an opportunity to help you solve problems of the world.

There is nothing more hopeful, there's no greater gift than to teach a person to read. When I was the Governor of Texas, I remember an African American woman walking up to me, and we were talking about the importance of teaching every child to read—not just a few, but every child to read. We believe in America that reading shouldn't be the right of just a few people; it ought to be—it's universal as well. And the woman walked up to me, and she said, "Mr. Governor," she said, "I want you to understand how people in my community feel." She said, "Reading is the new civil right." I feel the same way about global literacy. Reading will yield the peace we want.

So thanks for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. at the New York Public Library. In his remarks, he referred to Koichiro Matsuura, director-general, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Abdullah bin Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia in New York City *September 18, 2006*

*President Bush.* It's been my honor, Mr. Prime Minister, to be with you. You're one of the outstanding leaders in a very impor-

tant part of the world. I want to thank you for strategizing our discussions. We talked about a lot of things. The main thing

we talked about is how we can work together to keep the peace. And I want to thank you for your time.

*Prime Minister Abdullah.* Thank you, Mr. President. You shared me—with me Americans nation's, and your views on many issues is very, very impressive. And I am certainly most likely to see that you are

very concerned for peace and U.N. peace-keeping in the Middle East.

*President Bush.* Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:58 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks Following Discussions With President Jacques Chirac of France and an Exchange With Reporters in New York City September 19, 2006

*President Bush.* It's been a pleasure to have a meaningful, strategic dialog with Jacques Chirac. We talked about a lot of subjects. It's important that France and the United States work closely to keep the peace. We talked about Iran; we talked about Syria; we talked about the Palestinian-Israeli issue; we talked about Darfur; we talked about common problems and how to solve those problems. It was a very constructive and important dialog.

Mr. President, welcome back to America, and thank you for your time.

*President Chirac.* We're always welcome in the United States. Relations between the United States and France are longstanding and deeply rooted.

Well, indeed, today we have discussed and evidenced the fact that we have common approaches and a common sense of the main issues that we discussed, relating as they do to peace and to development throughout the world. In fact, this coincides with the 61st U.N. General Assembly, which is going to meet today.

So we discussed peace and development. And particularly on the subject of peace-related issues, we addressed the issue of Iran, of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; we addressed Lebanon and, of course, Africa, in particular—in Africa. And with respect

to Africa, we addressed the issue of what's going on in Darfur.

And we, as a result of this, have once again confirmed that we are entirely on the same wavelength. We have the same approach to the different issues, which are of deep and grave concern to us, as they challenge and jeopardize peace in different parts of the world.

I repeat what I've already said, namely that we concur, our views concur on these matters, particularly on the issue of a possible agreement with the Iranians. And therefore, France—I'm convinced the United States, the American administration and the French Government see eye to eye on these matters and on how to address them.

*President Bush.* One question a side. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

### *Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development*

*Q.* Yes, thank you, Mr. President. President Chirac has proposed suspending the threat of sanctions against Iran as an incentive to get them to the negotiating table. What do you think of that idea?

*President Bush.* First of all, France and the United States share the same goal, and that is for the Iranians not to have a nuclear weapon.