

Remarks Following Discussions With President Mahmoud Abbas of the
Palestinian Authority in New York City
September 20, 2006

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you for coming. Yesterday in my speech to the United Nations, I said that you're a man of peace who believes in a two-state solution. And after our conversation today, once again you confirmed that.

I, too, believe that the best way to bring peace to the Holy Land is for two democratic states living side by side in peace. I said in my speech yesterday that the Palestinian state must have territorial integrity. I firmly believe that. I also said in my speech that the—one of the great objectives of my administration is to achieve this vision. I fully understand that in order to achieve this vision, there must be leaders willing to speak out and act on behalf of people who yearn for peace, and you are such a leader, Mr. President.

I can't thank you enough for the courage you have shown. I assure you that our Government wants to work with you in order—so that you're able—capable of delivering the vision that so many Palestinians long for, and that is a society in which they can raise their children in peace and hope. And I know that society is possible. And I appreciate your vision along those lines.

So, welcome to Washington, DC [the United States]*; I think this is our fifth visit. Every time, I've left our visits inspired by your vision.

President Abbas. Mr. President, thank you very much. I'm honored to meet with you, as you said, for the fifth time during these past years.

First of all, I would like to thank you greatly for the wonderful speech that you have delivered yesterday before the United

Nations, and talk about the Palestinian issues and your vision of two states, and you adopt this vision. Mr. President, you are the first American President to adopt the vision of two states living side by side.

Of course, I've talked with the President about the situation in the Palestinian Territories and the difficulties that the Palestinian people are facing, as well as the possible solution that can get us out of these difficulties. And I mentioned to the President that more than 70 percent of the Palestinian population, they believe in the two-state solution, a state of Palestine and a state of Israel living in peace and security next to each other. That means that the Palestinian people desire peace, and there is no power on Earth that can prevent the Palestinian people from moving toward the peaceful solution and living and coexisting in peace.

Of course, we look forward to activate the various plans and various resolutions and the roadmap in order to be in a position to reach, with our neighbors, the desired objectives.

We always, Mr. President—we look forward to your support and your help and your aid, because we are in dire need for your help and support. Mr. President, we will always be faithful and truthful to peace, and we will not disappoint you.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. President Abbas spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

* White House correction.

Statement on the Creation of the United States-China Strategic Economic Dialogue

September 20, 2006

I am pleased to welcome the creation of the Strategic Economic Dialogue between the United States and China. My leading economic adviser, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson, will chair the U.S. side of the dialog, with support from Allan Hubbard, the Director of my National Economic Council. Deborah Lehr will serve as Secretary Paulson's special envoy to the dialog. President Hu and I agree on the importance of maintaining strong and mutually beneficial U.S.-China economic rela-

tions and on the need to establish an overarching bilateral economic framework between our two countries. The Strategic Economic Dialogue will help us achieve those objectives.

The economies of the United States and China have been engines of global growth. We must ensure that citizens of both countries benefit equitably from our growing economic relationship and that we work together to address economic challenges and opportunities.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments for the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding Office

September 20, 2006

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2007 Budget amendments for the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding Office in the Department of Homeland Security. The total discretionary

budget authority in my FY 2007 Budget would not be increased by this request.

The details of this proposal are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Gus Bilirakis in Tampa, Florida

September 21, 2006

Gus, thanks. There's nothing wrong with a son following in his father's footsteps, particularly when you've got such a good son as Gus Bilirakis. *[Laughter]* He's the right man for the United States Congress, and I appreciate you all coming to support him.

I've been looking for Brother. *[Laughter]* He claims he's working. *[Laughter]* But I

know he sends his best. He, like me, recognizes that Gus is the right man to serve you in the United States Congress. He really is. He's a good, decent, honorable, family-oriented man who will represent the interests of the folks down here. So Jeb sends his best.

But more importantly, so does Laura. *[Laughter]* Like me, Gus married well—