

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Business Leaders on the U.S.-Lebanon Partnership Fund

*September 25, 2006*

I've just had a fascinating discussion with four business leaders and members of my administration, all of whom are strategizing on how to help the good people of Lebanon recover from the recent crisis.

Our goal and our mission is to help Lebanese citizens and Lebanese businesses not only recover but to flourish, because we believe strongly in the concept of a democracy in Lebanon. Right from the beginning of the crisis, I had stated that our objective is to help the Siniora Government—the Siniora Government, which is a democratically elected government. And now we've got generous citizens of the United States, people who are very busy in their own right, who are willing to step forward and to strategize and raise monies to help people in Lebanon.

And this is a very important mission for our country. It's a public/private partnership. Our Federal Government has committed \$250 million; OPEC [OPIC],<sup>\*</sup> under Chairman Mosbacher's lead, has arranged financing. And now private sector individuals and businesses will work together to send a clear message to the Leba-

nese people: We care about you; we want you to live in a free society; we've got great hopes for you; we believe in your Prime Minister, Prime Minister Siniora; and we will back up our words with actions.

So I appreciate John Chambers, who has taken the lead for this group, and I appreciate you all taking time to go over to Lebanon and show the face of America. We're a compassionate people; we care when people suffer; and we care about the type of governments that people live under. And we strongly support the young democracies in the Middle East; we support the democracy of Lebanon; we support the democracy of Iraq. And our dream is one day for there to be a Palestinian democracy living side by side in peace with Israel.

Thank you all very much for your commitment. May God bless the good people of Lebanon. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:38 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John T. Chambers, president and chief executive officer, Cisco Systems, Inc.

## Remarks Following a Tour of Meyer Tool, Inc., in Cincinnati, Ohio

*September 25, 2006*

I've come to this company because, first of all, I like to honor the entrepreneurial spirit. We've got a father and a son who are running this company and making sure of two things: One, they're on the leading edge of technological change, and two, they got a workforce that is trained and prepared to be able to provide product.

This is a company that has benefited from the tax cuts. They've increased their employment by about 125 over the past 12 months. They've expanded because of the bonus depreciation schedule; in other words, the tax cuts encouraged them to buy equipment, and when you buy equipment, you expand your business. Plus, this

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<sup>\*</sup> White House correction.