

Remarks Following a Meeting With Special Envoy to Sudan Andrew S. Natsios

October 2, 2006

The President. Recently, I named my friend Andrew Natsios to be the Presidential Special Envoy to Sudan to help us deal with the issue in Darfur. The reason I named Andrew is, one, he knows the area well; he's been involved in this area for a long period of time. Secondly, he, like me, shares a deep concern about the suffering in Darfur.

We believe the world has a responsibility to respond to what this Government has called genocide. And Andrew Natsios is going to help rally the world to solve the problem. The United Nations can play an important role in helping us achieve our objective, which is to end human suffering and deprivation. In my view, the United Nations should not wait any longer to approve a blue-helmeted force, a U.N. force of peacekeepers to protect the innocent people.

And Andrew knows my opinion and knows my beliefs. And I appreciate him very much implementing the strategy that our Government will develop to save lives. And I thank you for your efforts again, and thank you for your commitment.

Special Envoy Natsios. Thank you. I've been going to Sudan now for 17 years. I know leaders in all regions of the country, and I'm going to use those contacts and that history to move this process along. I have a great affection, personally, for the Sudanese people, north and south. My first trip to Darfur was 17 years ago, during the first Darfur war—this is the third war in Darfur in 17 years.

And I think what our objective is, is not just to have a temporary fix for 2 months but to try to deal with the root causes of this so we don't have another fourth war in 5 years—should we end this one successfully.

So I'm going to work on that. I think with the President's strong support—both of us are committed to this, and we're going to see what we can do.

The President. Thank you, Andrew. Appreciate it.

Special Envoy Natsios. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey

October 2, 2006

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back to Washington. We just had a extensive and important dialog about how Turkey and the United States can and must work together to achieve peace. We talked about our determined efforts to fight terror and extremism. We talked about our common efforts to bring stability to the Middle East. We had an important discussion about

both Iraq and Iran. Our desire is for—to help people who care about a peaceful future to reject radicalism and extremism.

I made it very clear to the Prime Minister, I think it's in the United States interests that Turkey join the European Union. And I congratulate the Prime Minister and his Government for the economic reforms that have enabled the Turkish economy to

be strong, for the good of the Turkish people.

And finally, we shared our deep desire to improve the lives of those who are suffering in Darfur. The Prime Minister shared with me a personal account of what he saw, the suffering he saw, the human—the pitiful human condition he personally saw in Darfur. He shared with me his Government's anxiousness to help the people there, and I assured him I shared the same concern. And it's important for the United Nations and the Government of Sudan to take forward steps to help the—end the suffering.

I consider the Prime Minister a friend and a man of peace, and I welcome him.

Prime Minister Erdogan. Thank you. Distinguished members of the press, it is a great honor and pleasure to be here upon the invitation of President Bush, an ally. The United States is a strategic partner, a very important strategic partner for Turkey and an ally for many years.

In our meeting, we had the opportunity to discuss many points, especially terrorism. And the joint steps that we have taken in order to pursue with determination our fight against terrorism continues to be very important in our relations. In fact, we do

share the same opinion about forming a joint platform in order to combat terrorism on a global scale.

We also had opportunity to discuss Lebanon as well as Israel and Palestine.

It was important to hear the President say that their support for Turkey's membership to the European Union will continue. We have also had the opportunity to discuss Cyprus, and I have expressed our sensitivities with regard to the issues related to Cyprus. And we had an opportunity to extensively discuss what we can do in the Middle East, what Turkey specifically can do in the Middle East.

We have also discussed Turkey's progress and reforms with regards to the European Union—the Copenhagen political criteria as well as Maastricht criteria—and the recent work that is ongoing with the screening process at the EU for Turkey's accession.

All in all, I think we had a very positive meeting, and I would like to thank the President for that.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Erdogan spoke in Turkish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Dean Heller in Reno, Nevada

October 2, 2006

Thank you all for coming. It's good to be back in Reno. I appreciate the invitation. I'm here to say as clearly as I can, Dean Heller is the right person for the United States Congress. And I want to thank you for helping him.

I appreciate the fantastic fundraiser. It's a good sign, Dean, when your friends and neighbors are willing to put a little hard-earned cash into the hat in order to help you. [*Laughter*] But he's going to need

more than your money; he's going to need your time. And so coming down the stretch, I call on the grassroots activists and those who have been participating in campaigns to put up the signs and go to your houses of worship or your community centers and say, "We've got a good man in Dean Heller; he loves his family; he loves his country; he loves the people of the Second Congressional District. Let's send him to Washington, DC."