

I have said all along there is a better way forward for North Korea. There's a better way forward for the people of North Korea. If the leader of North Korea were to verifiably end his weapons programs, the United States and other nations would be willing to help the nation recover economically.

The message today, however, says to the leader of North Korea that the world is

united in our opposition to his nuclear weapons plans.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea. He also referred to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1718.

Remarks at the Iftaar Dinner October 16, 2006

Please be seated. Good evening, and *Ramadan Karim*. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are really glad you're here. This is the sixth year that we have been pleased to host an Iftaar at the White House. We're honored to be with you, and once again, we're honored to pay tribute to the month of Ramadan.

Islam is a religion that brings hope and comfort to more than a billion people around the world. It has transcended racial and ethnic divisions. It has given birth to a rich culture of learning and literature and science. And tonight we honor the traditions of a great faith by hosting the Iftaar here at the White House.

I'm so pleased our Secretary of State, Condi Rice, has joined us. Thank you, Madam Secretary. I'm pleased that Dr. Elias Zerhouni, who is the Director of the NIH, is with us. Good to see you, Elias. I thank Imam Eid from the Islamic Institute of Boston, who's with us. I welcome all the ambassadors and other members of the diplomatic corps.

Ramadan is the holiest month in the Muslim calendar. For Muslims in America and around the world, Ramadan is a special time of prayer and fasting, contemplation of God's greatness, and charity and service to those in need. And for people of all faiths, it is a good time to reflect on the

values we hold in common, including love of family, gratitude to God, the importance of community, and a commitment to tolerance and religious freedom.

America is a land of many faiths, and we welcome and honor the Muslim faith in our Nation. Our society is enriched by our Muslim citizens. Your commitment to your faith reminds us all of the precious gift of religious freedom in our country. America is a more hopeful nation because of the talents and generosity and compassion of our Muslim citizens.

Tonight we have with us a group of special guests, American Muslims who are serving our country. We have with us New York City police officers and a EMT worker who risked their lives to save their fellow citizens on 9/11, a military doctor, and a member of the Navy's Chaplain Corps, members of our Foreign Service, and military veterans who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq to protect our country and help those nations build free and democratic futures.

One of our guests is Farooq Muhammad. Farooq is the son of Pakistani immigrants and was born and raised in Brooklyn. He spent the past decade with the New York City Fire Department, first as an emergency medical technician and now as a paramedic. Farooq was at the World Trade

Center on 9/11, treating victims when the towers collapsed; he narrowly escaped death himself. He also recently volunteered in the mountains of Kashmir, where he helped treat the victims of last year's devastating South Asian earthquake. Farooq's courage and compassion represent the best of the American spirit.

Paramedic Muhammad is a proud Muslim; he is a patriotic American. And those are characteristics he shares with the other special American guests gathered in this room. All of you bring credit to your faith. You make America a better and stronger country, and we're honored by your presence tonight.

The United States also appreciates the many Muslim nations who stand with us in the war on terror, some of whom are represented here tonight. You know that the majority of the victims of the terrorists have been innocent Muslims, and many of you have seen terrorist violence in your

own cities and your streets. We welcome you here. We are proud to work with you to defeat the terrorists and extremists and help bring a brighter future to millions of Muslim people throughout the world who yearn for moderation and peace.

On this special evening, we celebrate the millions of Muslims that we are proud to call American citizens. We honor the many Islamic nations that America is proud to call friends. And we renew the ties of friendship that should bind all who trace their faith back to God's call on Abraham.

Laura and I are grateful that you're here. Once again, I wish you a blessed Ramadan. And now Imam Eid will say the blessing.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:52 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Imam Talal Y. Eid, founder and director of religious affairs, Islamic Institute of Boston.

Remarks on Signing the Military Commissions Act of 2006 *October 17, 2006*

Please be seated. Welcome to the White House on an historic day. It is a rare occasion when a President can sign a bill he knows will save American lives; I have that privilege this morning.

The Military Commissions Act of 2006 is one of the most important pieces of legislation in the war on terror. This bill will allow the Central Intelligence Agency to continue its program for questioning key terrorist leaders and operatives like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the man believed to be the mastermind of the September the 11th, 2001, attacks on our country. This program has been one of the most successful intelligence efforts in American history. It has helped prevent attacks on our country. And the bill I sign today will ensure that we can continue using this vital tool

to protect the American people for years to come. The Military Commissions Act will also allow us to prosecute captured terrorists for war crimes through a full and fair trial.

Last month, on the fifth anniversary of 9/11, I stood with Americans who lost family members in New York and Washington and Pennsylvania. I listened to their stories of loved ones they still miss. I told them America would never forget their loss. Today I can tell them something else: With the bill I'm about to sign, the men our intelligence officials believe orchestrated the murder of nearly 3,000 innocent people will face justice.

I want to thank the Vice President for joining me today. Mr. Vice President, appreciate you. Secretary Don Rumsfeld, I