

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso
of the European Commission
January 8, 2007

President Bush. I'm very pleased to welcome back my friend Jose Barroso. Thank you. We just had a great discussion about the importance between—of relations between the United States and the European Union. Jose has got a really important job, and I think he's doing it really well.

Our discussion was frank; it was open. We talked about the importance of the transatlantic relationship and how we can work to improve it. We talked about the importance for Europe and the United States to resolve any differences we have when it comes to the Doha round for trade, so that we can promote international trade. We both recognize that the best way to help impoverished nations is to complete this Doha round and to encourage the spread of wealth and opportunity through open and reasonable and fair trade.

Jose and I talked about the Middle East. There's no question that the Israeli-Palestinian issue is on a lot of people's minds. We are dedicated to a two-state solution, two democracies living side by side in peace. And we talked about ways that we need to work together to see if we can't bring that vision to fruition.

We're going to talk about Darfur here at lunch. I know that Jose is as committed as I am to helping solve what I've called a genocide. It is outrageous that people are being treated the way they are, and I'm confident Europe and the United States can work with other friends and allies around the world to help solve that difficult problem.

We talked about Iran. We talked about Syria. We talked about Iraq. We talked about a lot of issues. We also talked about the importance of energy independence and, at the same time, being wise stewards of the environment. We are very hopeful that the use of technologies and good policy

will help us diversify our energy supplies and be able to assure future generations that the environment of the world will be better off.

And so I thought it was a constructive dialog. Glad to have you back.

President Durao Barroso. Thank you very much, George. It was, indeed, a pleasure to meet again, President Bush. We have now these very regular meetings, and it's always a great occasion to exchange views on such important subjects.

In fact, we have considered bilateral and global issues. On bilateral, I underlined the importance we give to further—to make go further, go faster, to go deeper in our economic transatlantic partnership. This is the most important economic relation in the world, the relation between the United States of America and the European Union. And we believe we can achieve more if we look at it in a comprehensive manner. And I hope that now there will be some concrete work so that in our regular institutional summit, between the European Union and the United States, we can achieve some more complete results.

Of course, the most crucial factor is the succession—successful negotiations for Doha. Doha is not just about trade; it's also about development; it's about having a multilateral approach to trade. There is now the defining moment. We are really at defining moment, and we had a very good exchange, and we gave instructions to all negotiators to come with a solution as soon as possible. And of course it is important to engage also others, because this is a real global agreement that we are trying to build. And it will be a very important signal for the world community if we show that it is possible to have a global approach to trade and development.

Another global issue, but where United States and Europe have a very good—and we hope to improve relation and dialog—is precisely energy and climate. When we speak about climate change, it's not just about the environment—of course environment is crucially important—but it is also about global security. It's also about economic development and sustainability.

And so we are hoping to deepen our dialog on climate change, on technologies, on curbing emissions, on progress in terms of energy efficiency and in security. Of course, the key is diversification—diversification in all aspects, and we believe the work going on between our respective experts is a good signal of the commitment of our joint commitment to fight climate change, and also to have a more common approach to the problems of global security regarding energy.

We will, of course, consider other issues in the working lunch we're going to have. President Bush spoke about Darfur. I've been in Darfur recently. I can tell that's really a tragedy, what's going on, and we cannot accept that tragedy going on without a firm, united response of the international community.

So, once again, it was a pleasure meeting President Bush in the White House. I'm very much looking forward to other occasions where we can show to the world that this relation—the relation between Europe and the United States of America is, indeed, more important than ever.

President Bush. Thanks, Jose. Thank you. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Members of Congress on the Fifth Anniversary of the No Child Left Behind Act *January 8, 2007*

Laura and I want to thank Senator Kennedy and Congressman George Miller and Congressman McKeon and Senator Enzi for joining us as we celebrate the fifth anniversary of No Child Left Behind and discuss our strategy to reauthorize this important piece of legislation.

I want to thank the Members for joining us. I am proud of this piece of legislation. I think it's made an enormous difference, particularly in the lives of some of our poorer students. This country needs to get it right when it comes to public education, and the bill that I was honored to sign is an important first step toward making sure every child gets a good education in America.

And in our discussions today, we've all agreed to work together to address some of the major concerns that some people have on this piece of legislation, without weakening the essence of the bill, and get a piece of legislation done. And we showed in the past that we can work together to get positive results, and I'm confident we can do so again.

Again, I appreciate the wisdom and the vision of the Members who are here. I thank you for your steadfast and strong support for our public schools and the children in our public schools, and I'm looking forward to working with you to reauthorize No Child Left Behind.

Thank you all very much.