

billion a year. And most of the money is aimed at social justice programs, programs like education and health care.

I also know full well that—and I saw this firsthand yesterday in Sao Paulo—that many American NGOs and faith-based groups and individuals express their concern about the plight of the poor through programs and activities all aimed at giving people a chance. Yesterday in Sao Paulo, we went to a pretty wealthy neighborhood, but it was surrounded by a *favela*. And there we found in the midst of hopelessness, there was a little center of love. And some of the program money had been raised as a result of concerts given in the United States, where citizens, average citizens, contribute to make sure this program remain viable.

And so the trip is a—it's a statement of the desire to work together with people in our neighborhood. I've been to Central and South America a lot since I've been the President, because I fully understand a prosperous and peaceful neighborhood is in the interest of the United States of America.

I would call our diplomacy quiet and effective diplomacy—diplomacy all aimed at helping people, aimed at elevating the human condition, aimed at expressing the great compassion of the American people.

And, Mr. President, I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and visit with you, have a dialog about how we can advance our interests and the interests of our neighborhood.

President Vazquez. Concerning your question, the strategy for international in-

sertion of Uruguay is quite well defined and quite clear. We are in favor of an open integration process; we are strongly in favor of the regional process. We are where we are, and we don't want to leave this place. And the trade we have and the cultural, historical relationships that we have with our brethren countries in the region are very solid, very strong. But we don't want a closed integration process, but an open integration process.

This MERCOSUR should be able to integrate to other blocks or other countries of the world, and also each of the members of this process—for example, Uruguay—might be able to exercise its sovereign right of developing bilateral relations with other integration processes or other countries. It is in this sense that we are working, and it is in this sense that we are holding with the President of the United States.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:53 a.m. in the Visitors Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Minister of Development, Industry, and Trade Luiz Fernando Furlan of Brazil. President Vazquez referred to U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay Frank E. Baxter; Uruguay's Ambassador to the U.S. Carlos Gianelli Derois; and King Juan Carlos I of Spain. A reporter referred to President Hugo Chavez Frias of Venezuela. President Vazquez spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address

March 10, 2007

Good morning. Today Laura and I are in Latin America, where we are visiting five countries: Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia,

Guatemala, and Mexico. These countries are part of a region that has made great strides toward freedom and prosperity in

the past three decades. They have raised up new democracies, and they have undertaken fiscal policies that have brought stability to their economies.

Yet despite the progress we have seen, many citizens in our hemisphere remain trapped in poverty and shut off from the promise of this new century. Nearly one out of every four people in Latin America lives on less than \$2 a day. Many children never finish grade school. Many mothers never see a doctor. The fact is that tens of millions of our brothers and sisters to the south have yet to see improvements in their daily lives, and this has led some to question the value of democracy.

Our Nation has a vital interest in helping the young democracies in our neighborhood succeed. When our neighbors prosper, they create more vibrant markets for our goods and services. When our neighbors have a hopeful future in their own countries, they can find work at home and are less likely to migrate to our country illegally. And when our neighbors feel the blessings of liberty in their daily lives, the appeal of radicalism declines and our hemisphere becomes more secure.

The United States is doing its part to help our neighbors in Latin America build a better life for themselves and their families. We are helping these young democracies make their governments more fair, effective, and transparent. We are supporting their efforts to meet the basic needs of their citizens, like education, health care, and housing. And we are increasing opportunity for all by relieving debt, opening up trade, and encouraging reforms that will build market economies, where people can start from nothing and rise as far as their talents and hard work can take them.

On Monday, I will meet a Guatemalan citizen who has experienced the power of

open trade and free economies; his name is Mariano Canu. Twenty years ago, he was an indigenous farmer whose land provided barely enough corn and beans to feed his family. No one in his family had ever been to college, and most of the people in his village never got past the sixth grade. And his own children's prospects for prosperity looked just as bleak.

Mariano was determined to do better for his family, so he organized an association of small farmers called *Labradores Mayas*. He persuaded his fellow farmers to switch their crops to vegetables they could sell overseas, high-value crops like lettuce, carrots, and celery. Soon they were selling to big companies like Wal-Mart Central America. Today, the business he helped establish is thriving, and it supports more than 1,000 jobs. It also has supported something else, a college education for Mariano's son.

Mariano is showing what the people of Latin America can accomplish when they are given a chance. We must help others like him gain the opportunity to build a better life for their families. The generosity of the American people is helping our neighbors in Latin America build free and vibrant economies. By doing so, we will increase living standards for all our citizens, strengthen democracy in our hemisphere, and advance the cause of peace.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 a.m. on March 9 at the Hilton Sao Paulo for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 9, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 3-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's remarks in Uruguay. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted By President Alvaro Uribe Velez of
Colombia in Bogota, Colombia
March 11, 2007

Mr. President, thank you very much. I appreciate your hospitality. I am amazed by the beauty of your country. I've never been here to the beautiful capital city of your country, but Laura and I were struck by two things: the beauty of the landscape and the warmth of the people.

We—I bring greetings from the United States to the people of your country. We have been friends, and we shall remain friends. We value your democracy. I appreciate your strong leadership. We come during a period where your country has come through very difficult times, and now

there's a brighter day ahead. And my message to the people of your country is, we want to help every individual realize their God-given potential.

I'd like to propose a toast to the people of this country and to the leadership of this country. *Que Dios les bendiga.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. at Casa de Narino. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Uribe. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Alvaro Uribe Velez of
Colombia in Bogota
March 11, 2007

President Uribe. Mr. President of the United States of America, George W. Bush; distinguished members of the delegation; friends from the Government; distinguished journalists who have come from other countries and from Colombia: I would like to welcome again in the warmest fashion possible. I would like to welcome his delegation as well.

During the working lunch we have just had, at the end, I was able to read some beautiful paragraphs from Bolivar, the Liberator: one in the Charter of Angostura, where he actually was talking about the creation of the American Nation around—or on the basis of freedom, tolerance, and of having a general law that would respond to common interest through individual wills. The Liberator also mentioned a very nice paragraph during the Constitution assembly in Bolivia on the legacy of President George Washington.

I was saying that the relations between the Colombian people and the American people are sound. We have mutual understanding on democratic values since the birth of our two states. This visit is a reason for being proud. We will trust even more on our relations and the Colombian process, and we would like to thank you very warmly, President Bush.

You have come to Colombia at a time of unrest because of the peace process that is taking place. You have come at a time of revelations that really have motivated a public debate. But they are taking place because of one reason, and that reason is that our policy on democratic security has tried to defeat terrorism in the guerrillas, in the paramilitaries, because our democratic security policy wants to reestablish democratic institutions fully in Colombia. And these revelations are taking place because our law on justice and peace requires