

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  
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*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