

Remarks Following a Meeting With United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

January 16, 2007

President Bush. Mr. Secretary-General, welcome. The last time I visited with you in this Oval Office, you were the Foreign Minister of an important country. Now you come representing the United Nations, and I welcome you. Thank you for your willingness to serve. Thank you for this very important discussion we just had. I appreciated so very much how you opened up the discussion with a strong commitment to democracy and freedom. And the United States is willing—wants to work with the United Nations to achieve a peace through the spread of freedom.

And I want to thank you very much for the wise advice that you have given on a variety of issues. We talked about the Middle East, of course, and the importance of the Quartet. We talked about Darfur. Mr. Secretary-General, I want to thank you for your commitment to help the suffering people in Darfur, and I wish you all the best as you work hard to convince the President of the Sudan that it's in his interest, and in the world's interest, that he allow enhanced African Union peacekeepers in to provide peace and security for people who are suffering.

I want to thank you very much, as well, for our discussions about Iran and North Korea. I wish you all the best in this important job. I admired the way you handled your previous job, and I'm confident you'll do a fine job now.

Secretary-General Ban. Thank you very much, Mr. President. It's a great honor and privilege for me to visit the White House and meet with you, Mr. President, in my

new capacity as Secretary-General of the United Nations. I feel it a great honor for me to serve this organization, our global body, United Nations. At the same time, I'm very much humbled by all the challenges which I have to deal with and we are facing in the 21st century.

I would need strong participation and support of the United States in all activities of the United Nations. In fact, I believe that the United Nations and United States have shared objectives: peace and security, freedom, democracy. All these important goals and ideas are what the United States is also trying to achieve.

I hope to work very closely with the U.S. Government, including Mr. President, in realizing and achieving this shared goal. As I start my new administration as Secretary-General, I'd like to have strong commitment and support from U.S. Government, and I'm committed to devote all my time and energy to the address—to address all these important issues—Middle East and Darfur, Lebanon and Somalia, North Korea, Millennium Development Goals, and the climate changes. All are global issues which require global, collective wisdom and effort.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.

President Bush. You're welcome, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan.

Remarks Honoring the 2006 World Series Champion St. Louis Cardinals January 16, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. It's great to welcome the 2006 World Series champs, the mighty St. Louis Cardinals, to the White House.

I appreciate the fact that Members of the United States Congress have joined us. I see Members from Missouri—[*laughter*]*—*Senators, Members of the Congress and House. I see a Senator from Kentucky, Hall of Famer—Big Jim Bunning; glad you're here. Appreciate you all coming; thanks and welcome. I'm glad to see the former Attorney General, John Ashcroft. Thanks for joining us, John; appreciate you coming. Mr. Secretary, I thought you were a Texan.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso R. Jackson. I am a Texan, but I lived in St. Louis.

The President. Oh, you lived in St. Louis. [*Laughter*] Alphonso Jackson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, is with us. Thanks for coming, A.J. I appreciate very much that the Lieutenant Governor, Peter Kinder, has joined us today. Thanks for coming, Governor; appreciate you coming. Rob Portman, I thought he was a Cincinnati Reds fan. It's amazing what victory does to the—[*laughter*]. Everybody likes a winner. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you coming.

Last time that the Tigers and Cardinals—the first time they met in a World Series was in 1934. Franklin Roosevelt was the President; Dizzy Dean was the star. [*Laughter*] And now the Cardinals are back after an unbelievable season. You know, I featured myself as a baseball guy at one time. The Cardinals now have won 10 World Series. That's 10 more than the Texas Rangers have ever won. [*Laughter*] Fortunately, it doesn't depend on ownership; well, I take that back. [*Laughter*]

They say in baseball, in order to become the World Series champ, you can't have losing streaks of over two or three games. [*Laughter*] This club had losing streaks of one eight-game losing streak, another eight-game losing streak, and a seven-game losing streak, which really speaks to the character of the baseball team, doesn't it? I mean, it's a team that—[*applause*]. And I think it speaks to the character of the manager, Tony La Russa, and his staff.

When you're on one of those losing streaks, it's easy to get down and to forget the goal. So, like, I'm sure the sports pages were a little rough on you for a while there, you know? How can they possibly endure yet another eight-game losing streak? Well, you endure it as the result of character and leadership.

I had the honor of welcoming Tony and Dave Duncan and DeWitt and some of the other ones to the White House in August. And I was kind of looking at them, and they were looking at me, and I was trying to figure out whether I was looking at the winning team. And after they left—I haven't had a chance to share this with Tony La Russa; I was convinced the Cardinals were going to go all the way. You know why? Because he was, because he believed it. And I appreciate good leadership. And I appreciate the fact that not only is La Russa a fine manager and a fine man; I appreciate what he does for the community in St. Louis as well.

Character in the dugout is one thing; character in a community is another. I don't know if you still do this program, but somebody told me the other day that there is a program where they match a—you know, dogs that need an owner with somebody that needs help, from having a pet around. It turns out, a pet can help somebody deal with a mental illness. And Tony La Russa has combined his love of