

We have achieved an 8-percent annual growth in my country. This year, we're expecting a similar growth, 8 percent annually, with a 1-percent inflation, which creates more job opportunities. But this growth, as towards development, needs a greater space and a greater degree of investment, and for that, the FTA is essential. It would help us keep and maintain a strong democracy, a democracy that takes care of the poorest and that provides work to the unemployed. It is important to show the world that a democracy, with investment leads to development. And development is not achieved by becoming static and not opening our doors to the market.

The United States, ever since its Founding Fathers, has had an ideal, a mission to the world. In the forties, it sacrificed the lives of many young people to achieve the freedom of the world. Nowadays, we need to focus on democracy and free trade. And I am sure that both Republicans and Democrats would understand that this is key to the mission the United States has for the world.

President Bush and I talked about our contribution to the hemisphere and to humanity, to mankind, and that is the fight against drugs and the fight against coke. We have started a head-on fight against drug trafficking in my country, against money laundering, and against coca leaf production by offering farmers alternative crops, which is a way for them to earn a living in a just and legal way.

I have also congratulated President Bush on the very intelligent action he took against North Korea. It could have become a very serious problem for the world had it not been for the tactful intervention by the United States and his allied countries.

*President Bush.* Thank you.

*President Garcia.* In his last trip to Latin America, in spite of some political reactions, which are typical, it has been essential to see the President work with Brazil on ethanol as the new fuel. This will help us refocus on Latin America, which is very favorable for the region.

If President Bush allows me, I am sure that during the time that we will coexist as Presidents, he will achieve great things in the world. And he will visit Peru next year. But thank you very much, Mr. President, for the relationship we have of friendship. You are a very nice person, and I'm sure that our relationship will continue to grow.

Thank you very much.

*President Bush.* Thank you, sir. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:06 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Garcia 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.

## Remarks Following a Meeting on Medicare Prescription Drug Benefits *April 23, 2007*

Thank you all for coming. Today I have been discussing the Medicare Part D reforms that Congress passed and I signed and that Mike Leavitt and a lot of other people helped to implement.

This reform of Medicare has been a great success. Most importantly, it's been a great success for our senior citizens. The cost of the prescription drug plan has been less than anticipated. The individual stories

about people saving money and getting better health care has warmed my heart.

It took a monumental effort by a lot of citizens around the country to make the options that our seniors were given easy to understand. In other words, we reformed Medicare and gave seniors a lot of choices, and it took a lot of loving Americans a lot of time to make these choices available for our senior citizens. Now that the plan is in place, 39 million have signed up for it, drug costs are less than anticipated, and the cost to the taxpayer is about \$200 billion less than anticipated.

The lesson is, is that when you trust people to make decisions in their lives, when you have competition, it is likely you'll get lower price and better quality. It is the spirit of this reform that needs to be now extended to Medicare overall.

The trustees report will be coming out today on Social Security and Medicare. It'll

make clear that senior citizens are in great shape when it comes to the government making their promises. It'll make clear that baby boomers like me are in good shape, that the government will meet its promises. But for a younger generation of Americans, it sends yet another warning signal to the United States Congress that now is the time to work to make sure the Social Security is solvent for the future, as is Medicare.

And as we begin to think through solutions for Medicare, we ought to make sure that we remember the principles inherent in this Medicare reform that has worked so well for our seniors, and that principle is, competition works. Competition can lower price and improve the quality of people who are a beneficiary of such a plan.

Thank you all very much for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

## Remarks Honoring the 2007 Super Bowl Champion Indianapolis Colts *April 23, 2007*

*The President.* Thank you all. Please be seated. How about it? Like, the Indianapolis Colts here on the South Lawn, congratulations. Welcome to the Super Bowl champs.

I want to welcome Jim Irsay and Meg and Carlie, Casey, and Kalen. I had the honor of calling Jim after they won. I understand how hard it is to be an owner of a sports team and win. [*Laughter*] I never did it—[*laughter*—but he has, and I congratulate the organization. I congratulate Bill Polian as well. I want to thank all the front office personnel, the schedulers, the ticket sellers, the travel arrangers, the people who never get any credit. I appreciate you being part of a fine organization. And we're here on the South Lawn to congratulate you.

I congratulate the head coach of the Indianapolis Colts, Tony Dungy. And I'm glad his wife Lauren is here as well. Tony Dungy is the first African American coach to ever win a Super Bowl. That in itself is a great honor. But interestingly enough, he is a man who has used his—a position of notoriety to behave in a quiet and strong way in the face of personal tragedy that has influenced a lot of our fellow citizens. And I want to thank you for your courage.

Alphonso Jackson is here with us, Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Prior to today, he told me he was a Cowboy fan. [*Laughter*] Like, what are you doing here, A.J.? Oh, okay, you wanted to see the coach. All right, good. Yes. I thank Randy Tobias, who was an executive from Indianapolis but ran our HIV/AIDS initiative—by the way, helped