

Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Minister of Defense Yuriko Koike

of Japan; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Statement on the Federal Budget *August 23, 2007*

Today's deficit estimate release by the Congressional Budget Office is good news for American taxpayers. Like the estimates put forward by the Office of Management and Budget, it shows that our Government is on a path to meeting the goal I set forth of putting the budget into surplus by 2012. Balancing the budget requires keeping the economy strong, keeping tax rates low, and keeping spending in check.

Through tax relief, we cut taxes for American families and reduced tax rates on dividends and capital gains, energizing small businesses to invest and expand. And since we lowered these important tax rates, the economy has created more than 8 million jobs, increased wages, and grew tax revenues that will lead to a surplus.

Continued spending restraint is a critical element for accomplishing a balanced budget. I again urge Congress to pass spending bills by the end of the fiscal year without wasteful earmarks, without raising taxes, and in regular order, one at a time and on time. Congress has an opportunity to rise to the occasion and work with my administration to accomplish a balanced budget without raising taxes, and I hope they will do so upon their return to Washington in September.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

The President's Radio Address *August 25, 2007*

Good morning. This week, I traveled to Kansas City to address the annual convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I spoke about the ideological struggle that our Nation faces in the 21st century and the lessons we can draw from the advance of freedom in Asia in the 20th century. America's enduring presence and perseverance on that continent aided the rise of democracy, helped transform American enemies into American allies, and made our country safer.

Next week, I will address the members of the American Legion at their annual convention in Reno. In that speech, I will focus on the Middle East and why the rise

of a free and democratic Iraq is critical to the future of this vital region and to our Nation's security.

I will also provide an update on the developments we are seeing from our new strategy in Iraq. Every month since January, U.S. forces have killed or captured an average of more than 1,500 Al Qaida terrorists and other extremists. And in June, our troops launched a surge of operations that is helping bring former Sunni insurgents into the fight against Al Qaida, clear the terrorists out of population centers, and give families in liberated Iraqi cities a safer and more normal life.