

and those who provide material and financial backing to these individuals or to the Government of Burma.

Third, I have instructed our Commerce Department to tighten its export control regulations for Burma.

Burmese authorities claim they desire reconciliation. Well, they need to match those words with actions. A good way to start would be to provide the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations access to political prisoners, to allow Aung San Suu Kyi and other detained leaders to communicate with one another, and to permit Special Envoy Gambari to enter their country immediately. And ultimately, reconciliation requires that Burmese authorities release all political prisoners and begin negotiations with the democratic opposition under the auspices of the United Nations.

We will continue to review our policies and consider additional measures if Burma's leaders do not end the brutal repression of their own people whose only offense is the desire to live in freedom. Business as usual is unacceptable. So I applaud the efforts of the European Union and nations like Australia that have announced targeted sanctions on the Burmese regime. I commend nations such as Japan that have cur-

tailed their assistance to Burma in response to the atrocities. I appreciate nations such as Singapore and the Philippines and Indonesia, who have spoken out against the atrocities. I ask other countries to review their own laws and policies, especially Burma's closest neighbors: China, India, and others in the region.

The people of Burma are showing great courage in the face of immense repression. They are appealing for our help. We must not turn a deaf ear to their cries. They do have many friends around the world, including Laura. I am proud of Laura for all she has done to awaken the conscience of the world to the plight of the Burmese people. I believe no nation can forever suppress its own people. And we are confident that the day is coming when freedom's tide will reach the shores of Burma.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to First Lady Laura Bush; Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; and United Nations Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar Ibrahim Gambari. The President also referred to Executive Order 13448.

Statement on the Resignation of Mel R. Martinez as Chairman of the Republican National Committee *October 19, 2007*

Mel Martinez has served his party with the same distinction he serves his country. When Mel accepted the position as general chairman of the Republican National Committee, his goal was to ensure our party had the structure and resources in place for all Republican candidates in the 2008 elections to be successful. He has more than fulfilled that mission.

As general chairman of the Republican National Committee, Mel has effectively communicated our party's commitment to addressing the issues most important to all Americans. His message of hope and opportunity has resonated throughout America and strengthened support for our agenda. Because of his leadership, more Americans understand the Republican Party's efforts to grow our economy, support our

troops, strengthen our schools, and protect our country.

As his tenure at the RNC ends, Mel should be proud that he has represented the best of the Republican Party and its core values. I am grateful for his leadership at the RNC, his service in my Cabinet,

and his continued service as a Member of the United States Senate.

Mike Duncan has demonstrated that he is an effective chairman who will help our party win in the next election. I have confidence in Mike's leadership and look forward to continuing to work with him.

The President's Radio Address *October 19, 2007*

Good morning. This weekend, I will join millions of Americans in one of our favorite national pastimes, fishing. I'm going to be on the Chesapeake Bay. For those who love fishing, the most important thing is not the size of your catch, but the enjoyment of the great outdoors. Every year, millions of Americans grab their tackle boxes and head out to their favorite fishing holes. No matter where they drop their lines, they build memories that last a lifetime. And in the process, they contribute billions of dollars to our economy.

My administration is committed to protecting the environment that our sportsmen depend on. We believe that to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century, we must bring together conservationists, fishermen, sportsmen, local leaders, and Federal, State, and tribal officials in a spirit of cooperation. I call this "cooperative conservation." Instead of the old environmental debates that pit one group against another, we're moving our country toward a system where citizens and government can come together to achieve meaningful results for our environment.

One way we are practicing cooperative conservation is through our efforts to preserve our fisheries. Almost 3 years ago, I announced an ocean action plan to promote an ethic of responsible stewardship that will make our waterways cleaner, healthier, and more productive. Last year, I was proud to establish a marine conservation area in

the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. This is the single largest conservation area in the history of our Nation and the largest protected marine area in the world. We're also working to clean up marine debris and to address harmful fishing practices in international waters that destroy corals and other vital habitats. Earlier this year, I signed a law that will help end overfishing and create market-based regulations to replenish our fish stocks so we can keep them strong for generations to come.

Prior to my fishing trip, I am signing an Executive order that will preserve two of our Nation's most popular recreational fish, striped bass and red drum. These two species were once abundant in American waters, but their stocks have been overfished. The Executive order I sign will protect striped bass and red drum caught in Federal waters by moving to prohibit their commercial sale. It will promote more accurate scientific records about fish population levels. And it will help the Federal Government work with State and local officials to find innovative ways to ensure these two species are conserved for future generations.

As we work to protect our Nation's fisheries, we're also working to help migratory birds thrive. Each year, more than 800 species of birds make their way south for the winter and then return home to their breeding grounds the following spring. Their ability to survive these long journeys