

And the fundamental question facing the world on this issue is whether or not it makes sense to try to promote an alternative ideology. I happen to think it does. They say, "He's idealistic." Yes, I'm idealistic, but I'm also realistic in understanding if there is not an alternative ideology presented, these thugs will be able to continue to recruit. They'll use hopelessness to be able to recruit. And so it's—thank you for asking that question.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:31 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Khalid

Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, who was captured in Karachi, Pakistan, on March 1, 2003; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, President Jalal Talabani, and Vice Presidents Adil Abd Al-Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi of Iraq; former Chief of Staff to the Vice President I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby; Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation special prosecutor; Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA (Ret.), former commander, U.S. Central Command; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan. A reporter referred to Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate. A reporter also referred to the amendment by Sens. Jack Reed and Carl Levin to H.R. 1585. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this news conference.

## Message to the Congress Transmitting the Initial Benchmark Assessment Report *July 12, 2007*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Consistent with section 1314 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110–28) (the "Act"), attached is the report that assesses the status of each of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks contained in the Act and declares whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense; Commander, Multi-National Forces—Iraq; the United States Ambassador to Iraq; and the Commander of United States Central Command.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
July 12, 2007.

## Message to the Senate Transmitting the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism

*July 12, 2007*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (the "Convention"), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on April 13, 2005, and signed on behalf of the United States of America on September 14, 2005. As of July 3, 2007, 115 countries have signed the Convention and 23 have submitted their instruments of ratification or accession. The Convention entered into force on July 7, 2007. I also transmit for the information of the Senate a report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

The Convention imposes binding legal obligations upon States Parties either to submit for prosecution or to extradite any person within their jurisdiction who commits terrorist acts involving radioactive material or a nuclear device as set forth in Article 2 of the Convention, threatens or attempts to commit such an act, participates as an accomplice, organizes or directs others to commit such an offense, or in any other way contributes to the commission of such an offense by a group of persons acting with a common purpose, re-

gardless of where the alleged act took place.

States Parties to the Convention will also be obligated to provide one another legal assistance in investigations or criminal or extradition proceedings brought in respect of the offenses set forth in Article 2, in conformity with any treaties or other arrangements that may exist between them or in accordance with their national law. The recommended legislation necessary to implement the Convention will be submitted to the Congress separately.

This Convention is important in the campaign against international terrorism. I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention, subject to the understandings and reservation that are described in the accompanying State Department report.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
July 12, 2007

NOTE: This item was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 13. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

## Remarks Following a Briefing By Provincial Reconstruction Team Leaders and Brigade Combat Commanders

*July 13, 2007*

As part of our strategy to succeed in Iraq, I not only reinforced our military efforts with more troops, we also surged civilians to work with our military to help the reconciliation efforts in a country that is still recovering from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein.

And today my Security Council here had a opportunity not only to speak with our Ambassador in Iraq but also five members of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, three civilians and two military—colonels. They have briefed us on the grassroots effort to improve services, to improve the economy,