

Statement on the Situation in Timor-Leste  
February 11, 2008

I strongly condemn the violent attacks against Jose Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, and Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. Laura and I offer our condolences to the families of those killed in the attacks, and we send our prayers for a rapid recovery to President Ramos-Horta and the others injured.

Those who are responsible must know that they cannot derail democracy in

Timor-Leste, and they will be held accountable for their actions. The United States remains committed to working with the people of Timor-Leste to strengthen democracy there. I also offer my full support to the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, and the International Stabilization Force as they work to maintain calm and security.

Memorandum on Federal Support for the AbilityOne Program  
February 11, 2008

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies*

*Subject:* Federal Support for the AbilityOne Program

Americans with disabilities make valuable contributions to our country's workforce that help keep our Nation the world's economic leader. Expanding employment opportunities for these individuals will help ensure that our economy is drawing on the talents and creativity of all its citizens and that America remains a place of opportunity for all. Supporting the AbilityOne Program is one good way to achieve this goal.

The AbilityOne Program (formerly the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program) is a Federal initiative that works with public and private organizations to generate employment opportunities for Americans who are blind or have other disabilities. Nearly 43,000 individuals work in more than 600 community-

based nonprofit agencies that serve people with a wide range of disabilities and sell products and services to the Federal Government through the AbilityOne Program.

The AbilityOne Program has taken steps to embrace successful business practices, including e-commerce and performance-based contracting. Strong support from Federal customers is critical to fulfilling this important program's employment mission. Therefore, I encourage you to ensure that your agency's procurement officials acquire products and services provided by the AbilityOne Program, consistent with existing law.

Additional information about the AbilityOne Program may be obtained by contacting the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled or by visiting [www.AbilityOne.gov](http://www.AbilityOne.gov).

GEORGE W. BUSH

## Remarks Following a Discussion With President Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali

February 12, 2008

*President Bush.* It's been a honor and a pleasure to welcome the President of Mali here to the Oval Office.

We discussed a variety of issues. I was touched by the President's concern about the life of the average citizen in Mali. We are partners with the President and the people of Mali through the Millennium Challenge Account. And one reason we worked with the Government is because they've agreed to fight corruption and support the education and health of its citizens. This is a country that's committed to the rights of its people, and we're proud to be standing side by side with you.

Two issues that are very important to this administration, Mr. President, were the issues that my wife Laura discussed when she came to your country: One is literacy, and two is the eradication of malaria. And I assured the President that our commitment remains strong to both important issues. And I thank him very much for his hard work in helping his citizens deal with HIV/AIDS.

And finally, the President and I spent a fair amount of time talking about the dangers of radicals and extremists associated with groups like Al Qaida. And we talked about the need for close cooperation to protect the innocent people from those who murder the innocent in order to achieve their dark political vision.

So it's been my honor to welcome a good man here to the Oval Office.

*President Toure.* Yes. First of all, I would like to convey to the President of the United States the sympathies and solidarity of the people of Mali because of the destruction—

*President Bush.* Thank you.

*President Toure.* —brought by the tornadoes in some of the Southern States of the United States.

And then I told Mr. President that we were sensitive and impressed by the impression that we had from the visit of Mrs. Laura Bush to Mali some time ago. Also, thank the President for the friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Mali and the cooperation between Mali and the United States that we do entertain on both sides since the independence of Mali in 1960.

But I could also come to the United States just to tell Mr. President—

*President Bush.* Thank you, sir.

*President Toure.* —thank you, because the President had some initiatives not only for Mali but also for Africa, which we believe are historical initiatives, and which we do have the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the greater participation against the fight against AIDS through the Global Fund, the initiative of the eradication of malaria, and not to forget the Presidential initiative on literacy in Africa, which is very important in our view, because when you want to develop, you—

*President Bush.* That's right.

*President Toure.* —need to also improve basic education.

*President Bush.* That's right.

*President Toure.* So I emphasized to the President that—and I reaffirm—that Mali signed and Mali averred to all different initiatives on the fight against terrorism. So it is humanly inadmissible, unacceptable to see or to assist or to be indifferent to the suggestion that we are seeing to some practices which really do not deserve to exist.

So we had a fruitful exchange of views on our cooperation. So I said to Mr. President that I would like to thank him and also to convey all the gratitude of the people of Mali, but I emphasized also the fact that may God save Mali and the United States. President, thank you very much.