

When the American Embassy in Kabul reopened in the beginning of 2002, Ryan Crocker was our first envoy. When we liberated Iraq and removed the thug Saddam Hussein from power in 2003, I sent Ryan to help lead the reconstruction efforts. When the American Embassy in Pakistan needed new leadership, Ryan Crocker was put in charge. In 2007, I asked Ryan to return for a final mission to Iraq as America's Ambassador.

Two years later, Iraq is becoming a rising democracy, an ally in the war on terror, an inspiring model of freedom for people across the Middle East. When the story of this transformation is written, historians will note the extraordinary partnership between two exceptional men: General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. As the General carried out a surge of military forces to improve security, the Ambassador led a civilian surge to improve everyday life. In December, after months of intense negotiations, the world saw the culmination of Ambassador Crocker's masterful diplomacy: two historic agreements for long-term cooperation between the United States and Iraq.

This is not the first time that Ambassador Crocker has executed a brilliant diplomatic maneuver in Baghdad. During a rotation at the American Embassy nearly 30 years ago, he persuaded a young Foreign Service officer named Christine Barnes to be his wife. [*Laughter*] They have traveled the world together, and as Ryan prepares to retire from the Foreign Service, we wish the two of them many years of happiness.

General Petraeus recently said this about his retiring colleague: "It was a great honor for me to be his military wingman." And today it is my great honor to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to one of the finest Foreign Service officers in American history, Ryan Clark Crocker. And now the military aide will read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command, in his former capacity as commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. Following the President's remarks, Lt. Cmdr. Clay Beers, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Statement on the U.S. Airways Plane Crash in New York City *January 15, 2009*

My administration is coordinating with State and local officials to respond to this afternoon's plane crash in New York City. We continue to monitor the situation. Laura and I are inspired by the skill and heroism of the flight crew, as well as the

dedication and selflessness of the emergency responders and volunteers who rescued passengers from the icy waters of the Hudson. We send our thoughts and prayers to all involved in the accident.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 15, 2009

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2009.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, as expanded on August 20, 1998, has

not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the economic sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
January 15, 2009.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

January 15, 2009

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed no-

tice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2009.

GEORGE W. BUSH