

Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark, Secretary General-designate of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; President Hamid Kar-

zai of Afghanistan; and Gen. David D. McKiernan, USA, commander, NATO International Security Force, Afghanistan.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Vaclav Klaus and Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek of the Czech Republic in Prague, Czech Republic

*April 5, 2009*

Hello, everybody. It is—let me begin by thanking the President and First Lady for their extraordinary hospitality in this spectacular setting, in this beautiful city, in a country that is one of America's greatest friends. And I am thrilled to be in Prague, Michelle is thrilled to be in Prague. And everybody has been extraordinarily gracious. So the main message I have, first of all is, thank you for the friendship, for the cooperation, for the strategic partnership that exists between our two countries.

I do want to make a brief statement about some news that was made today. North Korea made a launch this morning that defies U.N. Security Council resolutions, that harms peace and stability for Northeast Asia. Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice have already begun reaching out to our friends and allies to coordinate ahead of the Security Council meeting that's been scheduled for this afternoon.

The launch only underscores the urgency of the agenda that I will be laying out in my speech later this morning. I call on North Korea to honor its commitment to abandon all nuclear weapons programs, to abide by recognized

norms of international relations, and to work to promote peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

North Korea's development of a ballistic missile capability, regardless of the stated purpose of this launch, is aimed at providing it with the ability to threaten countries near and far with weapons of mass destruction. This action demands a response from the international community, including from the United Nations Security Council to demonstrate that its resolution cannot be defied with impunity.

Thank you very much. Again, I want to thank the President and First Lady and the entire Czech delegation for their extraordinary hospitality and the warm friendship between our two countries.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 a.m. at Prague Castle. In his remarks, he referred to Livia Klausová, wife of President Klaus; Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan E. Rice. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks in Prague

*April 5, 2009*

Thank you so much. Thank you for this wonderful welcome. Thank you to the people of Prague. Thank you to the people of the Czech Republic. Today I'm proud to stand here with you in the middle of this great city, in the center of Europe. And to paraphrase one of my predecessors, I am also proud to be the man who brought Michelle Obama to Prague.

To Mr. President, to Mr. Prime Minister, to all the dignitaries who are here, thank you for your extraordinary hospitality. And to the peo-

ple of the Czech Republic, thank you for your friendship to the United States.

Now, I've learned over many years to appreciate the good company and the good humor of the Czech people in my hometown of Chicago. Behind me is a statue of a hero of the Czech people, Tomas Masaryk. In 1918, after America had pledged its support for Czech independence, Masaryk spoke to a crowd in Chicago that was estimated to be over 100,000. I don't think I can match his record—[laughter]—but I