

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey in Ankara

April 6, 2009

*Prime Minister Erdogan.* Distinguished members of the press, let me start by saying how pleased I am to have this opportunity to host the distinguished President of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama.

We have had a very busy day in Ankara today, and it will continue with a reception in Istanbul, and then we will have an ongoing—a continuing program tomorrow, which will mean that the visit to Turkey will have been quite a busy one.

We have had opportunity as two strategic partners to review the status of our bilateral relations. We also have had opportunity to discuss regional issues such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East. In addition to discussing these issues, we've also discussed issues looking forward into the future, such as energy. And we had an opportunity to assess the recent development with respect to NATO. I do believe that our fight against terrorism will continue in the future with the same determination and the same solidarity.

And I would like to thank the President for the warm interest that he has shown to our country, Turkey. And I leave the floor to the President.

*President Obama.* First of all, I want to thank the Prime Minister as well as the entire Turkish Government, from the President to the Speaker, for their extraordinary hospitality.

I had the opportunity to get to know the Prime Minister when we spent time together at the G-20. I was impressed with his leadership, and now I'm even more impressed because he gave a perfect summary of our conversation.

So just to reiterate what I said in my speech and what I've said throughout my visit, I think that Turkey is a critical strategic partner with the United States, not just in combating terrorism but in developing the kind of economic links, cultural links, and political links that will allow both countries to prosper and, I truly believe, the entire region and the world to prosper.

So I'm very much looking forward to the partnership with Turkey, and I'm convinced that under Mr. Erdogan and President Gul and their Government are going to be excellent partners in that process.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in Prime Minister Erdogan's office. In his remarks, he referred to Koksal Toptan, Speaker, Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Prime Minister Erdogan spoke in Turkish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks in a Discussion With Students in Istanbul, Turkey

April 7, 2009

*The President.* Thank you. Thank you so much. Well, it is a great pleasure to be here. Let me begin by thanking Professor Rahmi Aksungur—did I say that properly?—who is director of the university here. And I want to thank all the young people who've gathered together. This is a great privilege for me, and I'm really looking forward to it.

I'm going to make a few remarks at the beginning, and then I want to spend most of the time having an exchange and giving you an op-

portunity to ask questions of me, and I may ask some questions of you.

So as I said yesterday, I came to Turkey on my first trip overseas as President for a reason, and it's not just to see the beautiful sights here in Istanbul. I came here to reaffirm the importance of Turkey and the importance of the partnership between our two countries. I came here out of my respect to Turkey's democracy and culture and my belief that Turkey plays a critically important role in the region and in the