

June 16 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2009

for, and take part in, effective cooperative regional efforts to promote mutual understanding, confidence and transparency regarding security issues among the nations of the region.

Our governments and our citizens will work closely to address the global challenges of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy, organized crime and narcotics, climate change, poverty, infringement on human rights, energy security, and epidemic disease. The Alliance will enhance coordination on peacekeeping, post-conflict stabilization and development assistance, as is being undertaken in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We will also strengthen coordination in multilateral mechanisms aimed at global economic recovery such as the G20.

The United States of America and the Republic of Korea will work to achieve our common Alliance goals through strategic cooperation at every level. Proven bilateral mechanisms such as the Security Consultative Meeting and the Strategic Consultations for Allied Partnership will remain central to realizing this shared vision for the Alliance.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Start of Afghanistan's Election Season

June 16, 2009

I congratulate the Afghan people on the start of your official election campaign period. On August 20 this year, the people of Afghanistan will choose a President to lead your nation and also elect Provincial councils to represent you locally.

The successful Presidential candidate will have a full agenda and high expectations. Afghan institutions must better serve the people. There must be full accountability and transparency, so that Afghans can see where their money is spent. Fighters who are ready to lay down their arms and embrace peace must be reintegrated, and Afghanistan needs to work with all her neighbours to promote security and opportunity in the region. In all of these efforts, Afghanistan's next President will have a partner in the United States.

Each nation gives life to democracy in its own way, grounded in the traditions of its own people. The United States does not support or

oppose any particular Presidential or Provincial council candidate. Instead, we support the right of the people of Afghanistan to choose their own leaders. That is why we are working with Afghan electoral authorities and the United Nations to help Afghans ensure a credible, secure, and inclusive election process in which all candidates have fair access to media, can freely travel and campaign, and are comfortable with the integrity of the ballots cast on election day.

The United States seeks an enduring partnership with the Afghan people, not with any particular Afghan leader. That partnership will be dedicated to enabling the newly elected President and other officials to deliver governance, security, justice, and economic opportunity to all Afghans. That is the future that the Afghan people deserve, and that is the future that we will seek with the successful candidates and the people who elect them.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the New Zealand-United States Taxation Convention

June 16, 2009

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to its ratification, the Proto-

col Amending the Convention between the United States of America and New Zealand for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion With Respect to