

of President Funes; Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. President Funes referred to President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile; and former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil. He also

referred to the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and the Building Remittance Investment for Development Growth and Entrepreneurship (BRIDGE) Initiative. President Funes, a moderator, and two reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena of El Salvador in San Salvador

March 22, 2011

*Buenas noches.* President Funes, First Lady, former Presidents Cristiani and Saca, distinguished guests, on behalf of Michelle and our daughters, thank you for the wonderful hospitality that's been shown to us here in San Salvador.

As many of you know, this has been my first trip through Latin America as President, and this is our final night. We are closer to home. I mean this in more than just a geographical sense. El Salvador is one of those places where the bonds between the United States and Latin America are strongest.

Just about every Salvadoran has a loved one or a friend in the United States—husbands and sons, mothers and daughters—working hard, sacrificing every day. They strengthen my country, and they mean so much to El Salvador. They're very much in our thoughts tonight.

In my speech in Santiago yesterday, I said that Latin America is not the stereotype of a region in perpetual conflict or trapped in an endless cycle of poverty. I repeat that tonight because many look at a country like El Salvador and only see the struggles. I'm proud to work with President Funes, a courageous leader, to meet those challenges together as partners.

But I also want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the side of this nation that is too often overlooked, which is just as real and just as important. It's the El Salvador that endures, even when the earth shakes and the floodwaters rise, because Salvadorans are people who persevere.

It's the El Salvador that has struggled for justice and human rights. And along with President Funes, I was honored to visit the cathed-

ral this evening and pay my respects to Archbishop Romero, who remains an inspiration to people all around the world. And I see the current archbishop here. We're very grateful for the wonderful tour that you offered.

It's the El Salvador that not only forged historic accords, but has sustained them for nearly two decades, proving, in the words of your national anthem, that "happiness is found in peace."

And it's the El Salvador that gets up every day and goes to work—students, merchants, farmers, young entrepreneurs, businesspeople—who remind us that building a just and prosperous future cannot be the work of government alone; it must be the responsibility of all—of all—who love their countries.

Of peace enjoyed in perfect happiness  
El Salvador always nobly dreamed,  
To achieve this has been Her eternal  
struggle,  
To keep it, Her greatest glory.

With these words, I'd like to propose a toast, if I can get a glass. [*Laughter*] To President Funes and the First Lady, for their outstanding hospitality and friendship, and to the peace and happiness that we seek: for our peoples, for the region, and for the world. May we not only achieve our dreams, may we keep them for this and for generations yet to come.

*Salud.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. at the National Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Vanda Pignato, wife of President Funes; former

Presidents Alfredo Cristiani and Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador; and Archbishop

Jose Luis Escobar Alas of San Salvador, El Salvador.

## Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Jerusalem, Israel

March 23, 2011

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the bombing in Jerusalem today, as well as the rockets and mortars fired from Gaza in recent days. Together with the American people, I offer my deepest condolences for those injured or killed. There is never any possible justification for terrorism. The United States calls on the groups responsible to end these attacks at

once, and we underscore that Israel, like all nations, has a right to self-defense. We also express our deepest condolences for the deaths of Palestinian civilians in Gaza yesterday. We stress the importance of calm and urge all parties to do everything in their power to prevent further violence and civilian casualties.

## Remarks at a Celebration of Greek Independence Day

March 25, 2011

*The President.* Well, good evening, everybody.

*Audience members.* Good evening.

*The President.* *Kalispera.*

*Audience members.* *Kalispera.*

*The President.* Thank you, Your Eminence, for the kind introduction. It is always an honor to welcome you here in the White House. We've been friends for quite some time now, and His Eminence always displays such grace and good humor and is so generous. We are so very grateful for your leadership.

It is a wonderful pleasure to see so many friends and leaders of the Hellenic American community here as we celebrate the 190th anniversary of Greek independence. I want to acknowledge several people. First of all, we've got some Members of Congress here. Michael Grimm from New York, where's Michael? There he is. Carolyn Maloney, also from New York; John Sarbanes, from Maryland; and then we have another guy—I don't know if he's any relation—Paul Sarbanes, also of Maryland.

We've got Ambassador Demetrios Marantis, Deputy USTR. He's got a few fans here. We've got Nicholas Karacostas, the President of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association.

I want to especially welcome Deputy Foreign Minister Dollis for traveling all the way here from Athens to join us today. I spoke with

your Prime Minister, our good friend Mr. Papandreou, today, and I wanted him to extend our congratulations to the entire Greek nation. And we very much appreciate you being here to represent your Government.

We are also joined here by Greek Ambassador Kaskarelis. Where is he? There he is. Good to see you, Mr. Ambassador. We have the Cypriot Ambassador Anas—aww—[laughter]—Anastasiades—there you go—[laughter]—and his wife Maria.

Tonight we reaffirm the bond our two nations have shared for as long as we've existed. Our Founding Fathers were students of Greek philosophy and Greek history, drawing on Greek principles to guide our own Nation in its earliest days.

When it was time for Greek revolutionaries to fight for freedom, they looked to the United States for strength and support. And to this day, the United States and Greece shares a bond rooted in common values and common ideals.

As allies, we stand together, not only for our own security, but for the freedom of peoples around the world. And right now Greek and American soldiers are serving together in Afghanistan. And as we celebrate the independence of the Greek people, the United States and Greece are standing with our NATO allies