

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