

State Department, and the Austrian—[*inaudible*—Bureau, the Department for International Law. And this is working. We are really working in a precise, professional way on that. So thank you very much.

Let me say, Mr. President, I'm really happy that you are here, that you were here in Vienna. Come back, if possible. You will find a little bit more from our town and from the possibilities of our city. And don't let us wait for another nearly 30 years for the next visit. All the best. Thank you.

**President Bush.** Good job. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:50 p.m. in Zeremoniensaal Hall at the Hofburg Palace. Participating in the event were Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel of Austria and President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission. President Bush referred to President Heinz Fischer of Austria; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Chancellor Schuessel referred to Martti Ahtisaari, U.N. Special Envoy for the Future Status Process for Kosovo; and Director General Mohamed ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency. A reporter referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Manuchehr Motaki of Iran.

### **Joint Statement: United States-European Union Summit Declaration**

*June 21, 2006*

We, the leaders of the United States of America and the European Union (EU), met today in Vienna to respond to the concerns of our citizens for peace, security, stability and prosperity in an increasingly globalized world.

We welcome that over the past year our Transatlantic Partnership has delivered real results as shown by the political and economic Progress Reports we issued today. We remain committed to finding common or complementary lines of action in many areas. Over the last year, there have been many examples of how productive our relationship is in the Middle East, Iran, the Western Balkans, Belarus, on the frozen conflicts, and Sudan, as well as in our efforts to promote transatlantic trade and investment under last Summit's Economic Initiative.

We have decided to further strengthen our strategic Partnership by adopting a number of priority actions to support our cooperation in the following four areas:

- Promoting peace, human rights and democracy worldwide;
- Confronting global challenges, including security;
- Fostering prosperity and opportunity;
- Promoting strategic cooperation on energy and energy security, climate change and sustainable development.

#### ***Promoting Peace, Human Rights and Democracy Worldwide***

We recognize that the advance of democracy is a strategic priority of our age. We will intensify our efforts to promote peace, democracy, freedom, the rule of law and respect for human rights in the world to make it more secure, safe, and prosperous for all mankind. Noting the need for tolerance of diverse cultures, beliefs and religions and the importance of dialogue while emphasizing respect for universal human rights, we will sustain our efforts to advance democracy.

We will work with the United Nations and international and regional organizations, civil society, NGOs and dedicated individuals committed to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We will work to ensure that the newly created Human Rights Council becomes an effective and efficient body committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. We underline our shared commitment to UN-Reform and we welcome the establishment of and give our backing to the Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Democracy Fund. We will continue to support reform in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East and will promote greater participation of civil society in the reform process through our respective efforts, including the Barcelona Process, the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, and our joint actions through the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative and the Foundation and Fund for the Future.

We will continue to closely cooperate in the Middle East, notably through the Quartet. We welcome the temporary international

mechanism to deliver assistance directly to the Palestinian people. We will continue to deliver humanitarian assistance and promote Palestinian democracy and civil society. Whilst recalling President Abbas' commitment to a platform of peace, we will continue to urge the new Palestinian government to commit to non-violence, recognize Israel's right to exist and accept existing agreements and obligations. We will continue to call on Israel to ease restrictions on access and movement and to take additional steps including with respect to the Palestinian tax and customs revenues, to improve the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people. We remind both sides of their obligations under the 15 November 2005 Agreement. We will continue to promote a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the Roadmap in order to advance a just, viable and lasting two-state solution and we call on both parties to avoid unilateral measures that prejudice final status issues. We call on the Palestinian Authority government to implement policies that will permit the international community to provide greater support to and review its policies on contact with the Palestinian Authority.

We will strongly urge Syria to implement UNSC Resolutions 1559, 1595, 1636, 1680 and 1686 and to prevent its territory from being used to support violence in Iraq, and end cross-border transit and support for terrorist groups. Similarly, Syria must end its support for Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and prevent the smuggling of arms and other support to these groups. We will work together to increase support for human rights and democracy, and secure the release of political prisoners in Syria. We will strongly urge Syria to refrain from any attempt at destabilizing Lebanon.

We will jointly support political, economic and institutional reforms in Lebanon, as well as its sovereignty, democracy, territorial integrity, unity and political independence. We will strengthen efforts to coordinate assistance to Lebanon, and we support the reform plan of the Lebanese government and seek to work towards an international Core Group conference. We support the efforts of the Lebanese government to disarm and disband Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, as

called for in UNSCR 1559 and 1680, and we will support the call expressed by the UN Security Council to halt the flow of arms and funds to terrorist groups and militias. We support UNSCR 1686 and the continuation of the investigation of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

We support progress by the Government of Egypt towards ensuring fundamental freedoms, and building multi-party democracy. We will continue to encourage the Egyptian government to proceed with the fundamental political and constitutional reforms it announced particularly by replacing the emergency law with a counterterrorism law in conformity with international human rights standards.

We will support the newly constitutionally elected government of Iraq and call upon it to continue the policies of inclusiveness as a means to overcome divisions within Iraq. We will continue to assist in building an independent, stable, secure, democratic, prosperous and united Iraq at peace with its neighbors and the international community. We call on the international community to show its support for the new government in particular by increasing development, rule of law, and security assistance, offering capacity building support, providing generous debt relief on terms equivalent to the Paris Club Agreement and extending its local presence keeping in mind the security situation.

Over the past year our cooperation on Iran has reached a new level. We have worked closely together at every stage of the ongoing attempts to address the question of Iran's nuclear program. We have agreed on a set of far-reaching proposals as a basis for discussion with Iran. We believe that they offer Iran the chance to reach a negotiated agreement based on cooperation, if Iran is willing to make that choice. The United States has made clear that it is prepared to join the negotiations should Iran resume full and verifiable suspension of all enrichment related and reprocessing activities as required by the IAEA. We have agreed that if Iran decides not to engage in negotiations, further steps would be taken in the Security Council. We urge Iran to take the positive path.

Building on the success of the London January 2006 conference on Afghanistan, we will support Afghan efforts to build a democratic, accountable and sustainable state. We will pay particular importance to governance, human rights, reform of the public administration, the judiciary and security sector, counter-narcotics as well as an Afghan-led process of reconciliation and justice.

Recognizing the next year to be a crucial period for the Western Balkans we will build on the experience of our successful transatlantic cooperation by cooperating to stabilize the countries in the region, support their European and Euro-Atlantic perspectives and to combat organized crime and corruption. We will continue to work with NATO as well as the OSCE to ensure the security and prosperity of the region. On Kosovo in particular, we will continue to ensure the convergence of our positions on the ongoing talks in order to promote a lasting status that respects the Contact Group principles. We will develop our relations with Montenegro as a sovereign, independent State and call on both Serbia and Montenegro to pursue a direct and constructive dialogue on their future relations.

Ukraine has made remarkable progress in democratic and economic reforms. Building on the March 2006 elections, we will support Ukraine's development as a democratic, prosperous and secure country. We will help Ukraine pursue economic reforms, combat corruption and reform the energy sector.

We will continue to support the democratic aspirations of the people of Belarus and work together to strengthen democratic institutions, assist civil society, and promote independent media. We condemn the use of violence in Belarus and the repression of the democratic opposition and we urge the authorities of Belarus to release all political detainees. The travel ban imposed on President Lukashenko and others, as well as the freezing of assets of individuals responsible for violations of international election standards and human rights abuses are good examples of our broad cooperation and coordination. We remain resolved to help the people of Belarus achieve their aspirations for a better future.

We will contribute to finding a solution to the Transnistrian conflict that assures Moldova's territorial integrity. We will work with all relevant parties to resolve through peaceful, negotiated settlements the frozen conflicts in the Southern Caucasus and encourage the democratic processes in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

We will work together to promote democratic and economic reforms, human rights, freedom of expression and the press, the rule of law in Central Asia to promote international security and stability. We continue to call upon Uzbekistan government to facilitate an independent international investigation into the tragic events of Andijon.

We attach great importance to our relationship with Russia and are pursuing deeper cooperation on a range of issues of common interest, including some important foreign policy issues, non-proliferation and counterterrorism. We are concerned about some recent developments in Russia and the region and will work with Russia to promote energy security, the application of the rule of law, an independent judiciary and full respect for human rights, including free and independent media and a vibrant civil society, and a resolution of frozen conflicts in the region. We will make constructive use of the OSCE as an important forum for cooperative and comprehensive security and call on Russia to fulfill all Istanbul and OSCE commitments.

Regarding our respective relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, we recognize the need for greater collaboration to promote stable and effective democracies, as well as market economies that contribute to greater social cohesion. We will actively engage NGOs and civil society, and we will support access to information, establishment of rule of law and independent media where this is not provided. Where necessary, we call on countries in the region to provide coherent and effective support and protection to individuals, organizations or institutions working for the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy. We express our deep concern about the human rights situation in Cuba, and urge the Cuban government to take rapid steps to improve the situation. We welcome the reestablishment of the

constitutional order in Haiti, support the renewal of the UN Stabilization Mission's mandate, and welcome police and troop contributions to the mission.

We will jointly work towards rapid implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. We will work with the United Nations and other international and regional partners and organizations, including NATO, to strengthen the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) with the assistance required, and UN authorization to "bluehat" the AMIS force by September. We will continue to support the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan and will continue to mobilize resources for humanitarian needs.

We will seek to ensure successful elections on 30 July 2006 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and will continue our support for the building of government institutions, training programs, and security sector reform. In the post-transition the United States and the EU will prioritize support for improved governance, the rule of law and security sector reform.

In Somalia, we reiterate our support to the efforts of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) in pursuing dialogue, reconciliation and stable governance. We will assist the transition and the establishment of viable and inclusive institutions in order to promote stability in Somalia and the region.

We will further coordinate our respective efforts on humanitarian and democracy assistance to address the worsening plight of the population in Zimbabwe. We call on the Government of Zimbabwe to restore democratic freedoms and the rule of law, and to respect human rights. We are ready, as soon as significant action in this direction is taken, to reconsider the restrictive measures now in place against Zimbabwe. We also call for measures by the Government of Zimbabwe needed to reverse the economic collapse.

We will enhance our joint efforts in conflict prevention and crisis management by increasing consultations on current and potential crises, identifying ways to strengthen cooperation in crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction, and coordinating efforts to improve international crisis management capacities.

### ***Confronting Global Challenges, including Security***

Since no single nation can efficiently and effectively deal with global challenges such as climate change, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, pandemics and natural disasters on its own, we commit ourselves to strengthening our cooperation to address these challenges.

Consistent with our common values, we will ensure that measures taken to combat terrorism comply fully with our international obligations, including human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law. We attach great importance to our ongoing in-depth dialogue on our common fight against terrorism and our respective domestic and international legal obligations.

We will step up our cooperation against terrorism, including through denying resources (financing, travel, and other material support) and shelter to terrorists, and we will co-ordinate efforts to prevent a new generation of recruits from emerging by countering radicalization and recruitment, and promoting tolerance, including by cooperating on developing regional strategies and by implementing—and encouraging others to implement—steps required by UNSCR 1624. In particular, we will work to enhance our border security cooperation by improving lost and stolen passport data sharing with Interpol, coordinating the implementation of biometric standards based on ICAO recommendations. We will cooperate to block terrorism financing, in particular in the informal financial sector, by developing improved procedures for information sharing and a more pro-active use of financial investigations implementing FATF Special Recommendations, among others by enforcing cash declaration regulations for travelers, optimizing the use of financial intelligence and controls, and engaging the private sector to develop partnerships to enhance protection of financial institutions.

We will strengthen our cooperation by completing negotiations on a U.S.-Eurojust cooperative agreement and we will step up our coordination to improve counterterrorism capacity building in third countries. We welcome the signature of bilateral agreements by EU member states and

the United States to accompany the U.S.-EU Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty and Extradition Agreements, and will aim to bring them into force as soon as possible. We intend to agree without delay on a Comprehensive UN Convention on International Terrorism, and on a universally accepted definition of terrorism and we will work with others towards a targeted UN strategy on combating terrorism. We take note of the "Vienna Initiative", initiated on 4th May, on possible future tripartite cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs between the EU, the Russian Federation and the United States.

We will strengthen our efforts to prevent access by terrorists to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. We will work together to further implement our Program of Work on the Non-Proliferation of WMD, in particular by reinforcing our support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and we will continue to work together to strengthen it, stressing the importance of compliance and promoting its universality.

Our cooperation will include the full implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540, including by conducting joint demarches, where appropriate, to urge all countries to fully implement their obligations under UNSCR 1540, and by assisting States to meet their obligations. In implementing UNSC Resolution 1540, we will also address the issue of financing of proliferation-related activities and develop our cooperation in that regard by seeking to identify, track, seize or freeze assets associated with the proliferation trade, in accordance with national legislation and consistent with international law, and consider further actions against proliferation finance.

We will support the rapid opening and conclusion of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty at the Conference on Disarmament and emphasize that, pending the conclusion of the Treaty and the Treaty's entry into force, all states should declare publicly and observe a moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. We will continue to work together in the Nuclear Suppliers Group framework on proposals to develop transfer restrictions on enrichment and reprocessing

(ENR) technology and to support multilateral mechanisms for reliable fuel supply assurances for States that have chosen not to pursue ENR.

We will coordinate efforts in preparing for the Biological Toxins and Weapons Convention Review Conference with a view to promote a productive outcome, the universality of the convention and the implementation by all States Parties through national laws and regulations in order to put these obligations into practice. We reaffirm our commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and its full implementation.

We reiterate our support for multilateral efforts to improve prevention and combat global health threats such as the spread of pandemics, including HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases like SARS and Hepatitis. We agree that priority should be given to promoting effective control measures in animal health as a means to reduce outbreaks of H5N1 in birds. We will further increase regional and global cooperation between states, international organizations and civil society in mitigating and preparing for a pandemic, to which input by the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza is welcome. We will further improve coordination of our response to natural disasters that have cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

### ***Fostering Prosperity and Opportunity***

We reiterate our strong commitment to reaching an ambitious conclusion to the Doha Development Agenda by the end of 2006. These negotiations are at a critical phase and we call on all WTO members to demonstrate the political will and courage necessary to achieve an ambitious and balanced agreement that will help strengthen global economic growth, improve living standards, and alleviate poverty. We recognize the need for trade ministers to make substantial progress on core negotiating areas over the next few weeks in order to ensure that this historic opportunity to liberalize trade is not missed. As responsible leaders, we will continue to work in cooperation with other WTO members towards an agreement that is worthy of the objectives identified in

launching the Doha Development Agenda in 2001.

We will increase our partnership with developing countries to promote growth globally for the benefit of all. This will help us to realize the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives and commitments of the Monterrey Consensus, which have helped to galvanize efforts towards poverty eradication through development co-operation and economic growth.

We will redouble our efforts to promote economic growth and innovation and reduce the barriers to transatlantic trade and investment by implementing all aspects of the Transatlantic Economic Initiative, in line with the Work Program agreed at the U.S.-EU Economic Ministerial Meeting in November 2005, and to be updated and reviewed at a second U.S.-EU Economic Ministerial meeting later this year.

We endorse the new Action Strategy for the enforcement of intellectual property rights against piracy and counterfeiting. Implementation has already started with concrete actions aimed at promoting strong and effective enforcement in third countries, strengthening cooperation to reduce global piracy and counterfeiting, and offering public-private partnerships to protect intellectual property. We will enhance our dialogue to promote a more efficient international patent system.

We will build on the progress of the High Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum and associated dialogues, and expand implementation of our Regulatory Cooperation Roadmap to address new topics and sectors and initiate targeted exchanges of regulatory experts. As part of our Innovation Initiative, we will work to measure innovation performance, its impact on the economy, and to understand better each other's innovation policies. We will implement the U.S.-EU plan on e-accessibility with the goal of reaching a coherent approach on our policies in this area. We will work on an implementing arrangement on environment research and eco-informatics under our Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation. We will continue to work together through the

U.S.-EU Financial Markets Regulatory Dialogue and the Policy Dialogue on Border and Transportation Security.

We pledge to keep our investment regimes open and to build on existing investment flows to boost growth and create jobs in the transatlantic economy. We will address obstacles to transatlantic investment with a view to promoting closer economic integration.

We will redouble our efforts to conclude a first stage Air Transport Agreement in 2006. The United States and the EU will cooperate closely on the legal framework governing the transfer of air passenger data following the European Court of Justice ruling of 30 May 2006.

We will work together to ensure implementation of phase I of the Wine Agreement, and, as mutually agreed, pursue negotiations on phase II in September.

We have signed today a new Agreement on Higher Education and Vocational Training under which our respective educational institutions will inaugurate innovative joint study programs, promote exchanges of students, teachers, and other professionals, strengthen the Fulbright-Schuman Program and encourage greater institutional collaboration in tertiary education.

We recognize the need for tangible progress to be made towards the establishment of reciprocal visa-free travel for all EU citizens to the United States, as part of our efforts to promote the economic and social benefits of increased travel while keeping borders secure.

#### ***Promoting Strategic Cooperation on Energy and Energy Security, Climate Change and Sustainable Development***

We recognize the strategic role of security of supply, competitiveness and sustainability in the energy sector. In this connection, we strongly reaffirm our commitment to the energy security principles enunciated by the International Energy Agency. We have agreed to reinforce our strategic energy co-operation to:

- support diversification of energy sources and supplies;
- secure our energy infrastructure;

- promote market-based energy security policies that ensure competition, transparency, respect for contracts, and non-discriminatory trade, transit, and access;
- speed development of new lower-pollution and lower carbon technologies;
- accelerate investment in cleaner, more efficient use of fossil sources and renewable sources in order to cut air pollution harmful to human health and natural resources, and reducing greenhouse gases associated with the serious long-term challenge of global climate change.

We will cooperate to ensure sufficient, reliable and environmentally responsible supplies of energy at prices reflecting market fundamentals, facilitating sustained global economic growth as well as expanding access to energy in developing countries. Thus, we agree to:

- Improve energy security by enhancing the dialogue with the main transit, producer and consumer countries and by promoting diversification of energy sources and supply routes worldwide and notably in the Caspian Sea region, Middle East, continental Africa and Latin America;
- Analyze geopolitical implications of the worldwide energy situation as it develops, its impact on our external policies and to develop mutually reinforcing policies where appropriate;
- Promote energy security policies in key third countries by encouraging a gradual transition to market pricing and behavior, and co-ordinate capacity-building assistance to emerging economies, including to increase energy efficiency, adopt clean technologies and build strategic stocks;
- Support maintenance and improvement of pipeline infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted deliveries and facilitate diversification investments in large transnational projects by ensuring convergence of legal and regulatory frameworks and supporting collaboration among energy regulatory authorities, notably with Ukraine;
- Coordinate where appropriate technical assistance to improve energy legal and regulatory frameworks and investment climates in third countries;
- Improve the security of global energy networks and develop standards for physical security of critical energy infrastructure;
- Facilitate development of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG);
- Increase our coordination within international fora, notably the G8, the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the International Energy Forum (IEF);
- Use energy in a more efficient and environmentally responsible manner, and in particular cooperate on improving the efficiency of world-wide traded products. In this context we have just initiated a new Energy Star Agreement;
- Make more and better use of renewable energy sources and reinforce technological cooperation and partnerships, notably on environmentally-friendly low emission power generation technologies, hydrogen energy, carbon sequestration, cutting gas flaring and biofuels;
- Promote diversification of fuel sources in transportation sector, including through increase use of biofuels;
- Continue cooperation through the International Partnership for a Hydrogen Economy and increase collaboration over regulatory, standards and trade issues affecting alternative fuels and emerging technologies, especially hydrogen;
- Cooperate on developing efficient, transitional transport technologies, and fuel standards, such as plug-in hybrids or efficient diesel engines;
- Continue scientific exchanges among U.S. and EU research and development organizations focused on energy efficiency in buildings;
- Promote, consistent with national energy policies, safety standards in the production of nuclear energy.

To monitor and guide this process, we will conduct an annual strategic review of U.S.-EU energy cooperation.

We also agreed to promote energy security worldwide by applying the following Energy Security Principles:

- a. Contractual commitments should be upheld and market-based principles should prevail at all stages of the energy supply chain.
- b. Diversifying sources of energy and modes/routes of transit, and ensuring non-discriminatory third-party access to transit infrastructure will improve the functioning of energy markets worldwide.
- c. Open, transparent, non-discriminatory and stable legal conditions that ensure fair and equitable treatment for energy investment and trade are essential to helping producing and transit countries meet market demands.
- d. Further development of production and export capacities in producer countries in a safe and secure environment, and the upgrading of existing and development of new energy transportation infrastructures by producer and transit countries as well as further development of refinery capacity in all countries are critical.
- e. Bolstering and ensuring the highest levels of physical and environmental security and safety of energy infrastructures, as well as the highest level of nuclear safety, is crucial to the durability and sustainability of the global energy system.
- f. We should encourage the most economic and efficient use of energy worldwide notably through the use of market-based instruments to minimize negative environmental consequences, and should promote in particular the use of cleaner and more efficient use of fossil fuels and the development of economically competitive non-fossil energy sources based on appropriate policies and market-based instruments.
- g. We should promote continued research, development and deployment of alternative energy sources and the facilitation of technological and industrial co-operation.
- h. Supporting effective implementation of transparency and data sharing initiative (JODI), including on the evaluation of oil reserves, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) will improve transparency and predictability of the market for all stakeholders.
- i. Addressing energy poverty endured by many of the world's poorest people who will still lack access to modern energy services is a priority.

We will work more closely to address the serious and long-term challenge of climate change, biodiversity loss and air pollution and will act with resolve and urgency to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We will continue our dialogue and efforts under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including work on long-term cooperative action in the process established in Montreal in December 2005. To this end, we have agreed to establish an U.S.-EU High Level Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development to build on existing bilateral and multilateral initiatives and further advance implementation of the G-8 Gleneagles Plan of Action for Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development. This dialogue will be guided by the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC and will initially meet in fall 2006 in Helsinki. Among topics of importance for this dialogue will be experience with different market-based mechanisms to promote cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; advancing the development and deployment of existing and transformational technologies that are cleaner and more efficient, producing energy with significantly lower emissions; efficiency and conservation; renewable fuels; clean diesel; capture of methane; lower emitting agricultural operations and energy production and distribution systems, as well as other environmental issues.

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

**Remarks in a Discussion With  
Foreign Students in Vienna**  
June 21, 2006

**The President.** It's always important to wait on your wife. [Laughter] Please sit down. Here's what we're going to do. I'm going to give a statement, then answer a couple of questions. Then we'll get the press out of here and have a dialog. Is that okay? Yes. Let them get set up.

This will take a little bit of time and then we'll—first of all, I want to thank our Ambassador for setting this up, and thank you all very much for joining Laura and me. We're the parents of 25-year-old twin daughters who have dreams and aspirations just like I'm sure you do. And one of the things that I hope we're able to accomplish today is, I want to learn about you and your dreams and aspirations, and I want you to ask me questions about our country and, you know, the decisionmaking process that I go through. I'll answer any question you have.

I just want to assure you of one thing, that I believe that freedom is universal. I don't think freedom is just a right for American citizens. I don't think it's just a right for people who practice religion one way. I think it is the right of everybody who lives everywhere. I believe that free societies end up yielding peace and hope. And that's the cornerstone of my foreign policy.

I've had to make some very difficult decisions, as you know, and I made the decisions based upon what I think is in the best interest of my country, the security of my country. But I also believe the decisions I have made will end up helping people realize the great blessings of liberty. I believe people ought to be able to worship freely or not worship at all, but you're equally a citizen of the world. I believe that poverty and hopelessness in the spirit can be changed. I believe the United States has got an obligation to help others.

And we're doing so. We've got a very robust foreign policy. One part of the foreign policy you hear about is, obviously, my determination to defend ourselves. But we're also actively working with people who are suffering from HIV/AIDS in Africa. I'm deeply concerned about the Sudan and the situation

in Darfur. I believe that it's very important for the United States to work with friends and allies to accomplish our objectives.

And so the purpose of my visit here to Vienna has been to work with my European Union counterparts to join in a common alliance for the good of mankind. And so, thank you for giving me a chance to come by and visit. I'll answer a couple of questions. If anybody has any thoughts or questions and wants to be the lead-off person, please step up and do so. Don't be shy. [Laughter] Any questions or thoughts?

Yes, sir. Please. State where you're from so everybody knows.

**Kosovo**

**Q.** Mr. President, Mrs. Bush, and Ambassador McCaw, I just wanted—first of all, I wanted to say that I'm really honored to have been given this opportunity to participate in this breathtaking occasion. I would like—first of all, I would like to give thanks to Ambassador McCaw for the very friendly invitation to the Embassy and for choosing me as a student of this country that has been chosen here, among so many countries in the world. And want to thank also President Bush, American Government, and the American people, especially, for giving a continuous contribution and help to a country that was having, and is having, a tough time. Therefore, I have reason to believe that tough times never last, that tough people do.

**The President.** Do you mind if I use that sometime? [Laughter]

**Q.** It's not original from me. So long live America and its people. And thank you. And the following question is concerning my country. So I would like to ask you, since the peaceful people of Kosovo has put its trust to America and since the people of Kosovo believe in American power and American democracy, what will the American contribution be for the independence of Kosovo? And furthermore, to what extent is America as a superpower—to what extent is it ready to take on burden and responsibility for solving the problem of Kosovo and to contribute in its progress and democracy, economy and education and freedom?

**The President.** Yes, thank you very much. Is it Niser? Niser is from Kosovo. And yours