

agreement. The United States and the Russian Federation are actively working for unity among the UN Security Council members on these sensitive issues. We will continue consultations with our G-8 partners to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime.

Through our cooperation in the field of nuclear nonproliferation we seek to improve the security of our own peoples and of all others in the world community. In doing so, we are building on the unique historic roles and responsibilities of the United States and the Russian Federation in nuclear science and technology, both military and civilian. We are united in our determination to help make the benefits of nuclear energy securely available to all for peaceful purposes.

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

Statement on the Landing of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*

July 17, 2006

On behalf of all Americans, I welcome home the crew of the Space Shuttle *Discovery* from a safe and successful mission. Your courage and commitment to excellence have inspired us all, and a proud Nation sends its congratulations on a job well done. The men and women of NASA have dedicated themselves to putting our space program back on track and implementing our Nation's vision for human and robotic space exploration. America's space program is a source of great national pride, and this mission has been another important accomplishment in advancing space science, human space flight, and space exploration.

Proclamation 8036—Captive Nations Week, 2006

July 13, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The best hope for peace is the expansion of freedom throughout the world. During

Captive Nations Week, we reaffirm our commitment to advancing liberty, protecting human rights, and helping people realize the great promise of democracy.

In proclaiming the first Captive Nations Week in 1959, President Dwight Eisenhower said that "the citizens of the United States are linked by bonds of family and principle to those who love freedom and justice on every continent." Over the past five decades, the force of human freedom has overcome hatred and resentment and overthrown tyrants in nations around the globe. Freedom is on the march, and today more people live in liberty than ever before.

The advance of freedom is the story of our time, and we have witnessed remarkable democratic progress in recent years. The people of Afghanistan elected their first democratic parliament in more than a generation. The people of Kyrgyzstan drove a corrupt regime from power and voted for democratic change. Ending 16 years of civil war and interim governments, the people of Liberia were able to go to the polls, electing Africa's first female president. The courageous citizens of Iraq reached yet another important milestone in their journey towards democracy by forming a national unity government based upon the constitution they approved last October. In Lebanon, citizens recovered their independence and chose their members of parliament in free elections. That newfound independence has come under attack in recent days from terrorists and their state sponsors, who see freedom and democracy as a threat. The United States and its allies will stand with those in Lebanon who continue to struggle for their independence and sovereignty and who refuse to give over their country to extremism and terror.

At this critical time in the history of freedom, no nation can evade the demands of human dignity. In countries like Iran, North Korea, Belarus, Burma, Syria, Zimbabwe, and Cuba, governments must become accountable to their citizens and embrace democracy. The desire for freedom is written in every human heart, and we can be confident that in this century freedom will continue to prevail.