

which would like to do us harm, and that we've got to give our professionals the tools they need to be able to figure out what the enemy is up to so that we can stop it.

The Senate passed a good bipartisan bill that makes sure our intelligence community has the tools necessary to protect America from this real threat. And I want to thank you all and thank the Democrats in the United States Senate who worked closely with Mitch and John to get a strong piece of legislation, with a 68-vote majority, out of the Senate.

And this bill comes to the House of Representatives, and it was blocked. And by blocking this piece of legislation, our country is more in danger of an attack. By not giving the professionals the tools they need, it's going to be a lot harder to do the job we need to be able to defend America.

People say, "Oh, it doesn't matter if this law hasn't been renewed." It does matter; it matters for a variety of reasons. It matters because the intelligence officials won't have tools necessary to get as much information as we possibly can to protect you. And it matters because these telephone companies that work collaboratively with us to protect the American people are afraid they're going to get sued. And the American people have got to understand, these lawsuits make it harder for us to convince people to help protect you. And so by blocking this good piece of legislation, our professionals tell me that they don't have all the tools they need to do their job.

And so now the House and Senate are off on a 12-day recess without getting the people's business done. And when they come back from that 12-day recess, the House leaders must understand that the decision they made to block good legislation has made it harder for us to protect you, the American people, and we expect them to get a good bill to my desk—which is the Senate bill—as soon as possible.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John G. Peters, president, Northern Illinois University. He also referred to H.R. 3773.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations

February 15, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Secretary-General, welcome back to the White House. Thank you for your efforts to make the United Nations a constructive force for good.

I appreciate your tireless work to help solve some of the real humanitarian crises that we face, such as the crises in Sudan, the issues in Burma. I appreciate very much your leadership when it came to Kenya, and thank you for going to support former Secretary-General Annan.

I thank you very much for the leadership that you've shown in Iraq. This young democracy is beginning to gain confidence and make progress, and the U.N. mission there has been very constructive.

I appreciate very much your desire to help the poor and feed the hungry. And on my trip to Africa this week, that's exactly the same message I'll be taking, that the American people are a compassionate people and a decent people who want to help moms with—deal with malaria or families deal with HIV/AIDS, the need to feed the hungry.

So I'm honored you're here. I appreciate your vision. And thank you for your leadership and your friendship.

Secretary-General Ban. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for your warm welcome and strong support you have shown me during last 1 year while I was carrying out my duty as Secretary-General. It has been instrumental and very much appreciated.

I've been trying my best to make United Nations more trust-proof, transparent, and accountable and more effective organization. This effort will continue. At the same time, with your strong support and international community, I've been doing my best to address all these regional country issues, starting from the situation in Darfur, Lebanon, Myanmar, and also Kenya. There are so many problems that challenge at this time. I'm committed to address these issues.

At the same time, I've been able to again raise awareness and the political will in addressing global challenges such as climate change. And I need your strong support as we are going through this year, a midpoint year, to realize Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We are going to focus on food situation and agriculture, education, health, and all this, statistical systems, infrastructure of Africa.

In that regard, your visit to African states at this time will be very important and historic. I hope you will be able to discuss with African leaders on how to realize this Millennium Development Goals, how to help people overcome abject poverty and sanitation, access to educational opportunities.

In that regard, I wish you all the best, that this is a very great opportunities. And it would be also very much important for international community to sustain the momentum established in Bali December last year in climate change. I'm going to build up on this Bali roadmap so that we will be able to achieve this globally accepted framework, replacing this Kyoto Protocol.

The United States is the country with the most innovative for technology and financing capacities. I count on your leadership and active participation. I do appreciate your constructive engagement in this, starting from high-level meeting September last year and the major economies meeting in September in Washington and in Honolulu this year. I count on your leadership.

All in all, I need your strong support, because I believe a stronger partnership between the United Nations and United States is the crucial, the important element in carrying out this—my duty as Secretary-General and also making United Nations organization more strengthened in carrying out common challenges we share together.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Yes, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:09 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Executive Order 13461—Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Health and Human Services

February 15, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. Subject to the provisions of section 3 of this order, the officers named in section 2, in the order listed, shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary), if they are eligible to act as Secretary under the provisions of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, during any period in which the Secretary has died, resigned, or become otherwise unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Secretary.

Sec. 2. Order of Succession.

- (a) Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (b) General Counsel of the Department of Health and Human Services;
- (c) Assistant Secretary (Resources and Technology);
- (d) Assistant Secretary (Planning and Evaluation);
- (e) Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services;
- (f) Commissioner of Food and Drugs;
- (g) Director of the National Institutes of Health;
- (h) Assistant Secretary for Family Support;
- (i) Other Assistant Secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services appointed by the President, in the order in which they shall have taken the oath of office as such;
- (j) Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- (k) Director, Region 4.

Sec. 3. Exceptions.

- (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 2 of this order in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Secretary pursuant to this order.