AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

common enemies and promote our common interests in the Middle East. And when that day arrives, you'll come home with pride in your success and the gratitude of your whole Nation. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:24 a.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Colombia Free Trade Agreement Legislation

April 10, 2008

Today's unprecedented and unfortunate action by the House of Representatives—led by Speaker Pelosi—to change the rules governing legislation to implement our trade agreement with Colombia is damaging to our economy, our national security, and our relations with an important ally. It also undermines the trust required for any administration to negotiate trade agreements in the future.

By lowering tariffs for products made in America and sold in Colombia, this trade agreement would level the playing field for American workers and provide a boost for our economy at a vital time. Rather than supporting the opening of markets for our farmers and manufacturers, Democratic congressional leaders instead listened to narrow special interests and followed an isolationist path.

Today's action by the House of Representatives also sends a damaging message to the world that Congress cannot be counted on to keep its promises. Colombia is one of our strongest allies in the Western Hemisphere. Colombia's leaders are showing courage in improving the safety of their citizens while battling narcoterrorists that receive support from anti-American forces outside Colombia. The message Democrats sent today is that no matter how steadfastly you stand with us, we will turn our backs on you when it is politically convenient.

In addition, by changing the rules for how it considers legislation to implement trade agreements, the House has severed a bond of trust between the executive branch and the Congress, and with our trading partners, that has served our Nation well for decades. In order to negotiate trade agreements, we empower our trade representatives with the promise that Congress will consider trade agreements with a timely up-or-down vote. By breaking this bond, Democrats have undercut not just this administration, but future administrations as well. This will weaken our Nation's ability to negotiate fair trade agreements for American workers, farmers, ranchers, and service providers.

During the 16 months since the Colombia free trade agreement was signed, my administration has gone above and beyond any reasonable effort to achieve a bipartisan path for considering this agreement. At the expense of our economy and our national security, the House has instead chosen to take a shortsighted and partisan path.

Proclamation 8236—Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2008

April 10, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Pan American Day and during Pan American Week, we underscore the importance of a peaceful, democratic, and prosperous Western Hemisphere where our common values continue to strengthen friendships, advance freedom, and encourage fair trade.

The love of liberty is deeply rooted in our hemisphere. In the earliest days of our Republic, the people of the United States inspired patriots throughout the Americas to take their own stand for independence. Today, the decent and honorable people of both American continents are united in the desire for freedom and democracy. The United States stands with those who respect human rights and those who seek to bring change and hope to their countries. We look forward to the day when all of the Americas are wholly free and democratic.

My Administration remains committed to helping our friends as they advance the cause

of justice and economic opportunity throughout the Western Hemisphere. Through Millennium Challenge Compacts, we support development in countries that govern justly, invest in their people, and promote economic freedom. In addition, the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement, signed in 2005, has opened markets and created opportunities for American businesses, strengthened economic ties with our neighbors to the south, and brought hope to people so that they can better care for themselves and for their families. In December of 2007, I signed the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act to bring economic gains for both of our countries, empower workers, and foster accountability and the rule of law. We seek to build on these successes by working with the Congress to approve the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement and the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement. These and other free trade agreements enhance prosperity in the United States and signal our firm support for those who share our values of freedom and democracy.

As we recognize Pan American Day and Pan American Week, we will continue to work together to advance our common interests and build a future in which opportunity reaches into every community.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 2008, as Pan American Day and April 13 through April 19, 2008, as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:29 a.m., April 11, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 14. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Memorandum on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization Office

April 10, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008–18

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization Office

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 634(d) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008 (Div. J, Public Law 110–161), I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100–204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush