

economic development in our trade partners' economies.

But, look, as I said, we'll be prepared for any eventuality. Canada is the United States number-one supplier of energy. And we are a secure and stable supplier. That is of critical importance to the future of the United States. And if we had to look at this kind of an option, I think, quite frankly, we would be in even stronger position now than we were 20 years ago, and we'll be in a stronger position in the future. But my preference is not to renegotiate what we discussed in the past; it's to talk about the future. And I think that's what our respective—that's what, at least, the Canadian population wants us to do.

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

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:31 a.m. at Gallier Hall. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia. President Calderon referred to Secretary of Economy Eduardo Sojo Garza-Aldape of Mexico. Prime Minister Harper referred to his wife, Laureen Harper. A reporter referred to former Mexican Presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. President Calderon spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Portions of Prime Minister Harper's remarks were in French, and an English translation was provided. Some reporters spoke in Spanish and French, and their remarks were translated by interpreters. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this news conference.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush, President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada

April 22, 2008

New Orleans

As continental neighbors and partners committed to democratic government, the rule of law and respect for individual rights and freedoms, Canada, Mexico and the United States have shared interests in keeping North America secure, prosperous, and competitive in today's global environment. We met in New Orleans to discuss how we

might collaborate further to achieve these goals, as well as to discuss our hemispheric and global interests and concerns.

The Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP), based on the principle that security and prosperity depend on each other, is a useful mechanism that helps us to identify and pursue practical solutions to shared challenges in North America in a way that respects our individual and sovereign interests. We each remain open and accountable to our own people.

The SPP complements the success of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has helped to triple trade since 1993 among our three countries to a projected \$1 trillion in 2008. NAFTA has offered our consumers a greater variety of better and less expensive goods and services, encouraged our businesses to increase investment throughout North America, and helped to create millions of new jobs in all three countries. NAFTA is key to maintaining North America's competitive edge in an increasingly complex, fast-paced and connected global marketplace.

Our Ministers responsible for security and prosperity met in Los Cabos, Mexico on February 27, 2008 to advance the five priority areas we identified last year in Montebello. In New Orleans, we decided that our Ministers should renew and focus their work in the following areas:

- To increase the competitiveness of our businesses and economies, we are working to make our regulations more compatible, which will support integrated supply chains and reduce the cost of goods traded within North America. In the auto industry, for example, we are seeking to implement compatible fuel efficiency regimes and high safety standards to protect human health and the environment, and to reduce the costs of producing cars and trucks for the North American market. We also are strengthening efforts to protect our inventors, authors, performers and other innovators by advancing our Intellectual Property Action Strategy. We have forged stronger relationships to support more effective law enforcement

efforts to combat the trade of counterfeit and pirated goods.

- To make our borders smarter and more secure, we are coordinating our long-term infrastructure plans and are taking steps to enhance services, and reduce bottlenecks and congestion at major border crossings. In this regard, we are working to coordinate the efforts of federal agencies to enhance capacity at major border crossing points, such as Detroit-Windsor and San Diego-Tijuana. We are deepening cooperation on the development and application of technology to make our border both smarter and more secure, as well as strengthen trusted traveler and shipper programs. We will seek to allocate resources efficiently so as to avoid unnecessary inspections. We are exploring new customs procedures, such as a more uniform filing procedure, with the aim of reducing transactional costs while enhancing the security of our borders. We are cooperating to install advanced screening equipment at ports of entry to deter and detect the smuggling of nuclear and radiological materials. The United States and Canada are working to finalize a framework agreement to govern cross-border maritime enforcement operations in shared waterways. All of these efforts will help us more effectively facilitate the legal flow of people and goods across our shared borders while addressing threats to our safety.
- To strengthen energy security and protect the environment, we are seeking to develop a framework for harmonization of energy efficiency standards, and sharing technical information to improve the North American energy market. Together we intend to create an outlook for biofuels for the region, work to enhance our electricity networks, and make more efficient use of our energy through increasing fuel efficiency of our vehicles. Building on the gains in technology over the last 5 years, we are exchanging information and exploring opportunities for joint collaboration to further reduce barriers to expanding clean

energy technologies, especially carbon dioxide capture and storage to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. We are working to better North America's air quality and working together to improve the safety of chemicals in the marketplace.

- To improve our citizens' access to safe food, and health and consumer products in North America, we are increasing co-operation and information sharing on the safety of food and products. We are working to strengthen our respective regulatory and inspection systems to protect consumers, while maintaining the efficient flow of food and products among our three countries. We are working to make our food and product safety standards more compatible. We are also working to improve continental recall capacities and are engaging the private sector to ensure that our efforts are complementary.
- To improve our response to emergencies, we are updating our bilateral agreements to enable our local, State, Provincial, and Federal authorities to help each other quickly and efficiently during times of crisis and great need, including responding to threats posed by cyber or chemical-biological attacks. We have made significant progress in discussions for new bilateral emergency management agreements to help manage the movement of goods and people across the border during and after an emergency. We will explore ways to expand cooperation in North America to the trilateral level.

Our efforts in these areas have been informed by the insights of interested parties, in particular the North American Competitiveness Council (NACC), representatives from the business community who have helped us identify and develop solutions to the most pressing issues affecting North American competitiveness.

Our citizens represent the true promise and potential of North America. Our governments help best when they act to promote the conditions necessary for the liberty, safety and success of our people. We believe that we should continue and strengthen our regular dialogue and ongoing cooperation. The

partnership among Canada, Mexico and the United States is broader than the sum of our many bilateral and trilateral activities. We share the goals of strengthening democratic governance and reducing barriers to trade within our region and beyond. We also share a common purpose to strengthen our hemispheric institutions and consultative processes.

We will continue working to fight transnational threats that pose challenges to our countries and to the well being of our people, such as organized crime; trafficking in arms, people, and drugs; smuggling; terrorism; money laundering; counterfeiting; and border violence. The transnational nature of these threats makes it imperative that our domestic efforts be complemented and strengthened by our cooperation together, and in international fora.

We reiterate our support for the Bali Action Plan and stress the urgency of reaching agreement to ensure the full, effective and sustained implementation of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change now, up to and beyond 2012. We believe that the Major Economies Leaders Meeting should make a contribution to that outcome. All should redouble efforts to address climate change and to establish nationally appropriate programs and goals to be reflected in binding international commitments based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, to contribute to ensuring global greenhouse gas emission reductions, adaptation measures, energy security, and sustainable development. We are determined to work together to further explore regional cooperation in climate change efforts, including, but not limited to, advancing innovative and suitable clean energy technologies, building the capacity to adopt and deploy them and developing appropriate financial and technical instruments. We reaffirm our shared conviction that increased trade in environmental goods, services, and technologies can have a positive impact on global climate change efforts and encourage the removal of barriers to such trade.

We welcome the invitation of President Calderon to host the next meeting of North American leaders in 2009.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this joint statement. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Community Leaders in New Orleans

April 22, 2008

I want to thank the Governor, thank the mayor, thank the parish presidents, Congressmen. Thank you all very much—city council leaders, compassionate citizens from New Orleans. Thank you very much for briefing me and my team and the new Coordinator from the White House, Doug O'Dell, for keeping us abreast of progress that has been made down here and challenges that remain.

You know, one of the things—I came to New Orleans and spoke about the Federal commitment, and I said, it's been a devastating period, and the Federal Government is committed and will remain committed to helping. Thus far, the Federal Government's committed \$120 billion—little more than that—of taxpayers' money to help all along the coast. I think it's money well spent. I think it's important for our country that the gulf coast region and the great city of New Orleans recover as quickly as possible.

My impression is that—you know, that there's a lot more hope now than there was even from a year ago. I mean, there's just—people have a little different bounce in their step. But there are some significant problems. One is we got to make sure these levees meet the obligations and meet the standards.

Secondly, I am concerned about the health care system that was torn up and needs to be rebuilt in a way that encourages there to be good health care and in a way that recognizes the changing population of New Orleans.

Thirdly, I have been concerned about the stories on crime, just like the citizens have been worried about the stories on crime. And I appreciate the Federal attorney giving me an update, and I appreciate the mayor's efforts to work hard to hold people to account for breaking the law. That's what the average citizen expects; that's what the taxpayers who