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gave us a briefing on the outages. Interestingly enough, some electricity is already being restored in Houston, I'm told. And I do want to thank the utility companies for working hard to get electricity up. And to the extent that you need help on stringing lines, I'm confident other utility companies from around the country will help provide manpower.

Secretary Chertoff and David Paulison tell me that the Federal Government will be providing 1½ million liters of water a day and 1 million meals a day to help the people who have been displaced. That'll of course be coordinated with Governor Perry's office and the State of Texas, as well as the mayors.

One of the things that's very important for the city of Houston and the other cities is to get the water up and running, the sewage plants running. And that'll be a priority of ours to help them. And finally, debris removal; it's very important that our Corps of Engineer, working with local officials, implements a coordinated debris removal plan.

And so that's what we discussed this morning. This is a tough storm, and it's one that is going to be—it's going to require time for people to recover.

As well, the Secretary of Energy briefed us on, you know, preliminary reports on gasoline production, pipeline distribution. And it's a little early to fully assess where we stand, although I can say that, you know, one of the plant—one of the pipelines coming out of the gulf coast area is running—the Plantation Pipeline. And we are watching very carefully as to when the Colonial Pipeline can get up and running.

In the meantime, as I mentioned yesterday, in coordination with the Department of Energy, we suspended—and the EPA—we suspended reformulated gasoline rules so it would make it easier to import gasoline from abroad so as to take pressure off of our consumers.

And I repeat what I said yesterday: That the Federal Government, along with State governments, will be monitoring very carefully as to whether or not consumers are being mistreated at the pump—in other words, gouged. It's very important for our fellow citizens, during the period of temporary disruption, to be treated fairly.

And so I'm considering—have considered my plans over the weekend, and I will be going down to Texas on Tuesday to express the Federal Government's support—sympathy on the one hand and support on the other to—for this recovery effort and rebuilding effort.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana

September 15, 2008

President Bush. Good morning. President Kufuor and Mrs. Kufuor, it is a pleasure to welcome you back to the White House. The American people are honored to receive Ghana's official delegation. And Laura and I are happy to host two good friends.

The ties of friendship between the United States and Ghana are strong, and they are enduring. Many Americans—citizens trace their ancestry to Ghana; for example, the great jazz legend Louis Armstrong, traced his ancestry back to Ghana. Centuries ago, Armstrong's forebears came to America as slaves. In 1956, Armstrong returned to Ghana and played a concert for more than 100,000 people who turned out to celebrate their country's march toward freedom.

And when Ghana's independence was secure, President Eisenhower sent a message to Ghanaians from the people of the United States. He said, "We revere in common with you the great and eternal principles which characterize the free democratic way of life. I am confident that our two countries will stand as one in safeguarding this greatest of all bonds between us."

Half a century later, we see that President Eisenhower's confidence was well placed. Today, Ghana and America are still bound by our love for liberty, and we stand as one in our efforts to safeguard freedom.

Ghana and America stand as one as we work to secure freedom from poverty. Ghana's leaders are governing justly, fighting corruption, and investing in their people. And

America is proud to support these efforts through our Millennium Challenge compact. Together, we work with Ghana to improve agriculture and infrastructure, and support development in Ghana's rural areas, and bring prosperity to Ghana's people. We have worked to promote free trade as a powerful engine of prosperity for both our countries. Last year, trade between Ghana and the United States was valued at more than $600 million, an increase of more than 55 percent since President Kufuor and I took office.

Ghana and America stand as one in our work to free people from illiteracy and ignorance. Through the Africa Education Initiative, Ghana and the United States have partnered to provide thousands of scholarships to girls. We've trained teachers. And across that important country, schools are being renovated, textbooks are being distributed, and Ghana's children are looking toward a brighter future.

Ghana and America stand as one in our work to free people from disease. Together, we've protected hundreds of thousands of people from malaria. Starting this month, Ghana and the United States will begin distributing medicines to about 8 million people, as part of a new initiative to combat neglected tropical diseases.

Ghana and America stand as one in our work to promote free elections. Ghana is now in the middle of a lively election season, marked by spirited debate and close-fought contests, which sounds kind of familiar, Mr. President. [*Laughter*] Whatever the outcome, Ghana is showing Africa that democracy is not a challenge to be feared, but a sure path to prosperity and peace.

Ghana and America stand as one in our work to promote peace. Ghana is a vital partner in our efforts to resolve the crisis in Darfur. Ghana has more than 3,000 peacekeepers serving around the world, from Liberia and the Congo to Kosovo and Georgia.

President Kufuor, your country is a model of entrepreneurship and democracy and peace on the continent of Africa. We are grateful for the warm friendship your nation has shown ours. When Laura and I visited Ghana this February, we were touched by the gracious hospitality shown by you and Mrs. Kufuor. Thousands of people lined the street to show their gratitude to America. One shop even painted the colors of the American flag; I hope their business went up. [*Laughter*] I was moved by your decision to name a new road the "George Bush Motorway." Maybe next time I visit Ghana, I can see that motorway without stopping a lot of traffic. [*Laughter*]

What inspired us most on our visit was the incredible energy and optimism of Ghana's people. I will always remember the Little League game in Accra, played between children from local churches and a local orphanage. As each young batter stepped up to the plate, we heard about their plans for the future, to become businessmen or doctors or astronauts or even a fashion designer. One after another, we saw children confident of their place in a free and prosperous Ghana.

Mr. President, I congratulate you on the progress Ghana has made under your strong leadership. And on behalf of the American people, Laura and I are honored to welcome you and Mrs. Kufuor to the United States. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our great nations. Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where President Kufuor was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Theresa Kufuor, wife of President Kufuor. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Kufuor.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana

September 15, 2008

President Bush. Good morning. I'm pleased to be here with my friend the President of Ghana, John Kufuor of Ghana. We just had a very good discussion, and before I summarize it, I do want to say a word about the U.S. economy.

I know Americans are concerned about the adjustments that are taking place in our financial markets. At the White House and throughout my administration, we're focused on them, and we're working to reduce disruptions and minimize the impact of these