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PRESIDENT ISSUES INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE

Bush honors nation's military personnel for their sacrifice

President Bush honored the memory of the U.S. founding fathers and the service of American military personnel in a message celebrating July 4, Independence Day.

"America is a place of freedom and opportunity. We are caring toward neighbors in need and generous to the sick and struggling. We are a strong, decent, and good-hearted country," Bush said July 2.

Following is the text of President Bush's Independence Day Message:

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
July 2, 2004

INDEPENDENCE DAY, 2004

On Independence Day, we remember names like Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin --and we honor their courage and vision. We are grateful that our Founders pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to create an independent America. And we are thankful that this Nation under God is still free, independent, and the best hope of mankind.

America is a place of freedom and opportunity. We are caring toward neighbors in need and generous to the sick and struggling. We are a strong, decent, and good-

hearted country. All of us are blessed to be citizens of the United States and are proud to call America our home.

This Fourth of July weekend, we think of the men and women who are defending our freedom as members of the United States military. In Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, they are fighting the terrorists who threaten America and the civilized world. Our Nation honors these brave men and women, and their families, for their service and sacrifice.

Laura and I send our best wishes to all Americans for a safe and happy Independence Day. May God continue to bless the United States of America.

GEORGE BUSH

BUSH PRAISES U.S. ECONOMY, SOLDIERS IN WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESS

Improving economy gives Americans “restored sense of opportunity” says President

On the eve of the Fourth of July holiday, President Bush praised the “strengthening economy” and honored the sacrifice of U.S. soldiers around the world in his weekly radio address to the nation.

Bush believes Americans now have a “restored sense of opportunity” following the 10th straight month of job creation, a declining unemployment rate, rising consumer confidence, higher incomes and continued gains in home ownership around the country.

“Our strengthening economy is a tribute to millions of American entrepreneurs and workers,” said Bush. “By their hard work and optimism, our nation has overcome recession, terrorist attack, corporate scandals, and the many economic challenges that come in a time of war.”

The President also commended U.S. soldiers who are fighting terrorism around the world and “helping to build hopeful, democratic societies” in places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

“One of our greatest sources of pride on this Fourth of July is that men and women” who “wear the uniform of our country,” Bush said.

Following is the transcript of President Bush’s Radio Address to the Nation for July 3, 2004:

The White House
<http://www.whitehouse.gov>
July 3, 2004

President’s Weekly Radio Address to the Nation

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. As Americans gather this weekend to celebrate the Fourth of July, we can take pride in our country’s great history, and look to the future with confidence. America remains a shining example to the world of all that free people can achieve. And our goal as a nation is to make sure that all Americans can share in the promise of our country.

Our economy is showing steady progress. We’ve completed our 10th consecutive month of job creation. We added 112,000 jobs in June, and have added more than 1.5 million new jobs since last August. The unemployment rate has steadily declined, to 5.6 percent from 6.3 percent a year ago. With more jobs, and lower unemployment, we are seeing rising consumer confidence, higher incomes, continued gains in the rate of home ownership, and a restored sense of opportunity.

Our strengthening economy is a tribute to millions of American entrepreneurs and workers. By their hard work and optimism, our nation has overcome recession, terrorist attack, corporate scandals, and the many economic challenges that come in a time of war.

Our government is also doing its part. With pro-growth policies in Washington, we aim to encourage the hard work and optimism of our people. With tax relief, we are strengthening the spirit of enterprise. When people are allowed to keep more of what they earn, that is good for families trying to make ends meet, good for businesses looking for new customers, and good for those looking for jobs in our expanding economy.

Now that jobs are coming back, we must build on this progress, and help American workers and families continue to meet the challenges of our changing economy. My plan will help America continue to lead the world, help our workers gain the skills they need, and create an environment where small businesses will thrive and create new jobs.

Our first responsibility is not to raise taxes on hard-working Americans. All of the tax relief we have passed

should be made permanent, so families can continue to keep more of what they earn, and businesses can plan for the future with confidence. I have a plan to help businesses and families with the rising costs of health care, and reduce the burden of frivolous lawsuits that unnecessarily punish the job creators in America. I'm working to open more markets and level the playing field for American entrepreneurs, and farmers, and ranchers.

Our global economy requires Americans to remain prepared for change and innovation. That is why I have proposed to help our public schools and community colleges teach our future workers the skills they need to succeed. For the sake of economic security and job creation, I proposed a national energy policy that encourages conservation and production at home, and makes us less dependant on foreign sources of energy. All of these proposals are aimed at helping Americans prepare to meet new economic challenges, and I will continue to push the Congress to see them enacted into law.

This Fourth of July weekend, as Americans celebrate our freedom, our thoughts are also with the men and women who defend that freedom as members of the United States military. In Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, they are fighting terrorists that threaten America, and helping to build hopeful, democratic societies where the ideology of terrorism has no place. Our nation honors their sacrifice. And one of our greatest sources of pride on this Fourth of July is that men and women like them wear the uniform of our country.

I thank all of our servicemen and women for standing post. I wish all Americans a happy Independence Day.

Thank you for listening.

ALL PEOPLE DESERVE FREEDOM FROM TYRANNY, TERROR, POWELL SAYS

Secretary discusses range of issues with Indonesian students

Muslims across the world -- from Indonesia to Afghanistan, Iraq, the Middle East, Kosovo, and other areas -- "are as entitled to a system that is free of dictators and free of terrorists as any other people on the face of the earth," according to Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In remarks to students in Jakarta, Indonesia, televised by RCTI Television July 2, Powell stressed that the United States seeks to help countries reform and modernize their societies.

The United States "does not go out for adventure, does not go out for colonies, does not go out to suppress any people," he said. "We go out to help. Our reform efforts, our modernization efforts that we are now engaged in with the greater, or the broader Middle East nations, across North Africa and through the Middle East, [have] that same purpose."

With respect to Indonesia, Powell said the United States believes "free, fair and open elections are the way to go in a democratic system," and will engage fully with whomever the Indonesian people select as their leader in a few days.

"We're quite sure the Indonesian people will select someone who is committed to democracy, who is committed to the welfare of the Indonesian people, to protect human rights and will be interested in improving the economy in every way possible," he said.

Powell said he believes there is "a lot of anti-Americanism in the world today" because people do not fully understand what the United States is trying to accomplish in Iraq or the Middle East.

In Iraq, Powell said, the United States is "hard at work" to support the democratic process, from the selection of the Interim Iraqi Government under Prime Minister Iyad Allawi to the drafting of a constitution that will respect the rights of women and minorities.

"I hope that the people of the world, especially my Muslim brothers and sisters, when they see this development, they will understand that we have gotten rid of a dictator

and we put in place a government that will be responsive to the people of Iraq,” he said.

Regarding the trial of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, Powell said that he hopes the people of the world “will listen carefully to the charges that are being placed against this individual.”

“I think that the people of the world should watch carefully, listen carefully. Assume he’s innocent, if you will, and let’s assume that. And let the Iraqi people, through their courts, decide.”

With respect to the Middle East, Powell said the United States wants “a Palestinian state that is living side-by-side in peace, with no violence, with the State of Israel.”

“I work every day with President Bush on that goal. And it is a difficult goal to achieve because of the violence, because of the animosity between the two sides,” he said. “But we’ll keep working on it, and we had good conversations here in Indonesia with all of the other foreign ministers who are here for these meetings.”

The secretary said that those who suspect the United States of invading countries for land or oil should look at the history of America’s involvement over the past 15 years in Kuwait, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

“[I]f you look at our history over the last 10 or 15 years and you see how we have been involved in countries that have Muslim populations, it has always been for the purpose of putting down a wrong and to stay just long enough until we can stabilize things and give it back to the people,” he said.

In response to a question about visa issuance, Powell said that new security requirements for students wishing to study in the United States are “not anti-Muslim.”

This policy “was simply something we had to do to protect ourselves and now that we have a better understanding of our systems and we’ve improved them. We will do everything we can to lower the barriers, to make them as low as possible, because I want you [students] to come to the United States. I want you to go to our schools, I want you to come enjoy, I want you to come see what America is all about. I want you to come experience our values and who we are as a people.”

When asked about negotiations to end nuclear programs

in North Korea, Powell stressed that the United States has “no intention, desire, plan to attack or invade North Korea.”

“The President’s made it clear that he wants a diplomatic solution to the problem of North Korea having nuclear weapons. And he is engaged with a six-party framework arrangement now,” he said.

“The North Koreans have said they are prepared to give up their nuclear capability,” Powell continued. “We are now in a process of intense negotiations to see under what circumstances, and under what conditions, and with what assistance, the North Koreans need in order to bring this about. I think that we will just keep pressing ahead with out six-party negotiations.”

UNITED STATES EXPECTS KHARTOUM TO ACT ON DARFUR IMMEDIATELY

USAID’s Natsios will press for U.N. resolution “in days”

By Judy Aita

Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- The United States will give Sudanese officials “days, not weeks” to act decisively to neutralize the Jingaweit and measurably improve conditions for the more than 1 million displaced persons before pressing ahead with a U.N. Security Council resolution on the crisis, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Andrew Natsios said July 2.

Speaking with journalists after privately briefing the Security Council on his visit to Sudan, especially Darfur, earlier this week, Natsios said, “We will not be waiting for a long time ... we’re not talking about months here, we’re talking about days, not weeks.”

The USAID administrator said he found no opposition to the draft resolution from the other 14 members of the Security Council.

“I got the sense from the group that if the Sudanese government does not implement what it promised [to Secretary of State Colin Powell], there would be interest in supporting” the resolution, he said.

The draft resolution, among other items, would impose an arms embargo and travel ban on the Jingaweit militia. It calls on the Sudanese government to fulfill its commitments to stop all military attacks in Darfur, disarm and neutralize the Jingaweit, protect civilians, and end restrictions on aid to the region. The current draft, however, does not include any immediate restrictive measures against Khartoum government officials.

Natsios said that Jingaweit senior commanders “have wealth and power and travel outside the country, and such a ban will have an effect on them.”

Whether the United States will press for U.N. sanctions on Sudanese government officials will depend on what “the government does in the next few days, weeks,” he said.

The United States currently has its own sanctions imposed on Sudan.

On the final day of his visit to Sudan July 2, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said there have been “gross and systematic” violations of human rights in Darfur.

President Bush sent Powell and Natsios to Sudan June 29 and 30 to investigate conditions and press the Sudanese government to neutralize and disarm the Jingaweit, reverse the crisis, and create conditions that will allow the displaced to return home safely and with dignity.

Natsios said that Powell specifically asked the government to take steps to ensure that wheat and other humanitarian goods can be brought into the country and that aid workers have access to the camps and the displaced population.

“The displaced people in Darfur told us repeatedly and told the staffs of all our organizations that the cities and displaced camps have become prisons, concentration camps,” he said. “The Jingaweit will execute men on sight if they leave the camps. If the women go out to get firewood or to cook their meals, they rape them.”

The situation in Darfur, Natsios said, “is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.”

“The thing that makes this very different from almost all other recent emergencies is the fact that these populations cannot rely on what we would call traditional coping mechanisms for survival,” the USAID administrator said.

“Most people survive emergencies on their own. We help them in the international community, but they help themselves even more. Almost all of the 14 or 15 traditional coping mechanisms that people in poor countries use to survive nutritional and public health crises like this are unavailable [in Darfur] because they are imprisoned in these camps and the cities and they can’t help themselves,” he said.

“So they are entirely dependent on us. If they do not have access they are going to die,” Natsios said. He added that there has already been a measles epidemic that killed hundreds of children, as well as an outbreak of severe diarrhea. There is a threat of meningitis and, with the onset of the rainy season and mosquitoes, malaria has begun to spread through the camps.

The United States already has spent \$117 million on the emergency and will spend another \$150 million over the next 18 months, Natsios said.

Please Note: Most texts and transcripts mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage www.usmission.ch. Select “Washington File” from the drop-down menu under “News.”