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National Security Advisor Dr. Condoleezza Rice Discusses War on Terror at McConnell Center for Political Leadership

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As Prepared for Delivery

I'm pleased to be here to discuss with you the defining foreign policy challenges of our time -- and these are challenging times. We live in an age of terror, in which ruthless enemies seek to destroy not only our nation and not only to destroy all free nations but to destroy freedom as a way of life. Yet we also live in an age of great opportunities to increase cooperation among the world's great powers and to spread the benefits of democracy and tolerance and freedom throughout the world. The defense of freedom has never been more necessary and the opportunity for freedom's triumph has never been greater.

In these challenging times, America is fortunate enough to have a leader like President George W. Bush and I am proud to serve him. President Bush's foreign policy is a bold new vision that draws inspiration from the ideas that have guided American foreign policy at its best: That democracies must never lack the will or the means to meet and defeat freedom's enemies, that America's power and purpose must be used to defend freedom, and that the spread of democracy leads to lasting peace.

This vision stands on three pillars. First, America will defend the peace by opposing and preventing violence by terrorists and outlaw regimes. Second, we will preserve the peace by fostering an era of good relations among the world's great powers. And third, we will extend the peace by seeking to extend the benefits of freedom and prosperity across the globe.

The very day of the September 11 attacks -- as smoke still rose from the Pentagon, and the rubble of the Twin Towers, and that field in Pennsylvania -- President Bush told his advisors that the United States faced a new kind of war, and that the strategy of our government would be to take the fight directly to the terrorists. That night, he announced to the world that the United States would make no distinction between the terrorists and the states that harbor them. President Bush promised that America's words would be credible. And he has proved true to his word.

Since that day, more than two-thirds of al-Qaida's known leadership have been captured or killed. The rest are on the run -- permanently. And we are working with governments around the world to bring to justice al-

Qaida's associates -- from Jemya Islamiya in Indonesia, to Abu Sayef in the Philippines, to Ansar al-Islam in Iraq. Under President Bush's leadership, the United States and our allies have ended terror regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. All regimes are on notice -- supporting terror is not a viable strategy for the long term.

And, of course, we must face our worst nightmare: The possibility of sudden, secret attack by chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons and the coming together of the terrorist threat with weapons of mass destruction. September 11 made clear our enemies' goals and provided painful experience of how far they are willing to go to achieve them. We cannot afford to allow the spread of weapons of mass destruction to continue. For so many years, the world pretended that important treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty alone could keep this problem in check. For many years, the world refused to insist that all nations live up to the many resolutions that it passed. For many years, the world marked time while the proliferation threat gathered.

The United States is now confronting the threat posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction with aggressive new policies that are already yielding results. The decision to hold the Iraqi regime accountable after twelve years of defiance restored the credibility of the international community and increased the security of America and of all free nations.

The former Iraqi regime was not only a state sponsor of terror. It was also for many years one of the world's premier WMD-producing states. For twelve years, Iraq's former dictator defied the international community, refusing to disarm, or to account for his illegal weapons and programs. We know he had both because he used chemical weapons against Iran and against his own people. Because, long after those attacks, he admitted having stocks and programs to UN inspectors. The world gave Saddam one last chance to disarm. He did not and now he is out of power.

The President's strong policies are leading other regimes to turn from the path of seeking weapons of mass murder. Diplomacy succeeded in Libya -- in part, because no one can now doubt the resolve and purpose of the United States and our allies. The President's policy gives regimes a clear choice -- they can choose to pursue dangerous weapons at great peril or they can renounce such weapons and begin the process of rejoining the international community.

Libya's leader made the right choice and other regimes should follow his example. We are working with the international community to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. And -- with our four partners in East Asia -- we are insisting that North Korea completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programs.

As we advance a broad non-proliferation agenda, we also recognize that determined proliferators cannot always be stopped by diplomacy alone. But they can be stopped. Through the President's Proliferation Security Initiative, the United States and a growing number of global partners are searching ships carrying suspect cargo, and -- where necessary -- are seizing dangerous materials. Earlier last month, the President also announced new proposals to close a loophole that undermines the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, to strengthen anti-proliferation laws and norms and tighten enforcement. We must strengthen the world's ability to keep dangerous weapons out of the hands of outlaw regimes.

We now know, however, that there are two paths to weapons of mass destruction -- secretive and dangerous states that pursue them, and shadowy private networks and individuals who also traffic in these materials, motivated by greed or fanaticism or both. And often these paths meet. The world recently learned of the network headed by AQ Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. For years, Khan and his

associates sold nuclear technology and know-how to some of the world's most dangerous regimes, including North Korea and Iran. Working with intelligence officials from the United Kingdom and other nations, we unraveled the Khan network and are putting an end to its criminal enterprise. Together, the civilized nations of the world will bring to justice those who traffic in deadly weapons, shut down their labs, seize their materials, and freeze their assets.

All of these efforts and many others require the close cooperation of many nations. Across a range of issues, we are seeing exactly that. I will not deny that there is a great deal of loud chatter out there. But this noise is obscuring one of the most striking facts of our time: The world's great powers have never had better relations with one another. And there has never been a lower likelihood of great power conflict -- with all the destruction and disaster that entails -- since the birth of the nation state in the mid-17th Century.

In Europe, the threat of another catastrophic, continental war -- omnipresent throughout most of the last century -- has all but disappeared. The vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace -- the dream of centuries -- is closer to reality than at any time in history. NATO and EU enlargement are erasing the last lines of the Cold War and advancing freedom to all of Europe. In fact, the Central and East European countries, once members of the Warsaw Pact, have taken up their duties in the defense of freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. In Russia, we are seeing that the path to democracy is uneven and the nation's success not yet assured. Yet, we are working closer than ever with Russia on common problems.

For many years, it was thought that it was not possible to have good relations with all of Asia's powers. It was thought that good relations with China came at the expense of good relations with our ally Japan, and good relations with India came at the expense of constructive engagement with Pakistan. This President has changed this paradigm. Our Asian alliances have never been stronger. Forces from Australia, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines have made important contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan. And we are building a candid, cooperative, and constructive relationship with China that embraces our common interests but still recognizes our considerable differences about values.

And we are working with the nations of Africa and Latin America to promote prosperity, fight disease, and solve regional conflicts. The Millennium Challenge Account is revolutionizing the way America provides aid to developing countries by linking new assistance to good governance, investment in people, and economic freedom. The Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief -- a five-year, \$15 billion initiative -- will help to prevent seven million new infections, treat at least two million people with life-extending drugs, and provide care for ten million more people affected by the disease. The President's leadership in forging peace in Africa has brought hope to Liberians, Congolese, and Sudanese for the first time in many decades. In our own neighborhood, President Bush has re-energized negotiations on the Free Trade of the Americas agreement, and completed Free Trade Agreements with Chile and five Central American democracies.

As we move forward with this ambitious agenda, we must never lose sight of a central truth: Lasting peace and long-term security are only possible through the advance of prosperity, liberty, and human dignity. The War on Terror -- like the Cold War -- is as much a conflict of visions as a struggle of armed force. The terrorists offer suicide, death, and pseudo-religious tyranny. America and our allies seek to advance the cause of liberty and defend the dignity of every person. We seek, in President Bush's words, "the advance of freedom, and the peace that freedom brings."

That means, above all, addressing what leading Arab Intellectuals have called the "freedom deficit" in the Middle East. The stakes could not be higher. If the Middle East is to leave behind stagnation, tyranny, and violence for export, then freedom must flourish in every corner of the region.

That is why the United States is pursuing a forward strategy of freedom for the Middle East. Freedom must be freely chosen, and we will seek out and work with those in the Middle East who believe in the values, habits, and institutions of liberty. We will work with those who desire to see the rule of law, freedom of the press, religious liberty, limits on the power of the state, and economic opportunity thrive in their own nations. And we will encourage the full participation of women. Today is International Women's Day -- a day to reflect on past achievements and on the challenges ahead. In the Middle East alone, recent years have seen much progress. Women and girls can now go to school in Afghanistan. In Iraq, women are overcoming decades of oppression and are participating in the rebuilding of their nation. Morocco has a diverse new parliament, and King Mohammed has urged it to extend the rights of women. Yet more must be done. As President Bush has said, "No society can succeed and prosper while denying basic rights and opportunities to the women of their country."

Iraq and Afghanistan are vanguards of this effort to spread democracy and tolerance and freedom throughout the Greater Middle East. Fifty million people have been liberated from two of the most brutal and dangerous tyrannies of our time. With the help of over sixty nations, the Iraqi and Afghan peoples are now struggling to build democracies, under difficult conditions, in the rocky soil of the Middle East.

In January, Afghanistan approved a new and progressive constitution. And later this year, the Afghan people will hold national elections. Every day Iraqis take more responsibility for their nation's security -- from guarding facilities, to policing their streets, to rebuilding the infrastructure that Saddam Hussein neglected for decades. The Iraqi people are making daily progress toward democracy. We are working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty. And today, members of Iraq's Governing Council signed a new Transitional Administrative Law. This historic document protects the rights of all Iraqis and moves the country toward a democratic future.

In Iraq, the work of building democracy is opposed by hold-outs among their former oppressors and by foreign terrorists. These killers seek to advance their ideology of murder by halting all progress toward democracy and a better future. They are trying to shake the will of our country and our friends. They are killing innocent Iraqis. They are sowing a reign of terror. But we and the people of Iraq will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins because America and her forces will stay the course until the job is done.

The world is watching. The failure of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan would condemn millions to misery and embolden terrorists around the world. The defeat of terror and the success of freedom in those nations will serve the interests of our Nation, because free nations do not sponsor terror and do not breed the ideologies of murder. And success will serve our ideals, as free and democratic governments in Iraq and Afghanistan inspire hope and encourage reform throughout the greater Middle East. We cannot falter, and we will not fail.

The work of building democracy in these nations is hard, and success will require the work of a generation. Winning the Cold War was not easy, either -- and it took forty years -- but the free world's alliance of strength and conviction prevailed, because we never abandoned our values or our responsibilities. As in the Cold War, progress may at times seem halting and uneven. Times of the greatest strategic importance can also be times of great turbulence. It is always easier for Presidents, no less than citizens, to do the expected thing, to follow the accepted path. Boldness is always criticized; change is always suspect. Yet Presidents from Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt, to Harry Truman, to Ronald Reagan knew that history is the final judge. And I can tell you, like those Presidents, this President knows that his obligation is not to the daily headlines, but to securing the peace and that it is history that will be the final judge.

I remember serving on the National Security Council staff a dozen years ago, when the Berlin Wall fell, the Warsaw Pact dissolved, and the Soviet Union gave way to a free Russia. It was, of course, exhilarating to be in government at such a time, and part of me felt some small measure of pride. But that pride quickly gave way to a humble awe for the giants who faced the great challenges of the post-World War Two moment -- the Trumans, the Marshals, the Achesons, the Kennans, and to those who re-imagined and revitalized the struggle: Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, and George Herbert Walker Bush.

These men and women in the most uncertain of times, amidst often noisy acrimony, made decisions that would bear fruit only years, in some cases decades, later. My colleagues and I were simply reaping the harvest that they had sown.

That harvest -- a safer, freer, better world -- is no less our hope for the decisions the United States and our allies and friends are making today. Realizing this vision may take decades. It certainly will not happen on my watch or on this President's watch. It will require a commitment of many years.

But the effort and the wait will be worth it.

Thank you.

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