

Message on the Observance of Cuban Independence Day, 2005 May 20, 2005

I send greetings to those celebrating the 103rd anniversary of Cuban Independence.

Freedom is the birthright of all mankind. Leaders across the Americas understand that the hope for peace in our world depends on the unity of free nations. America's continued support of democratic institutions, constitutional processes, and basic liberties gives hope and strength to those struggling in our hemisphere to reclaim the rule of law and their God-given rights. As we observe Cuba's independence today, we look forward to the day when Cuba is free, and my Administration supports efforts to hasten that day's coming. The tide of freedom is spreading across the globe, and it

will reach Cuban shores. No tyrant can stand forever against the power of liberty because the hope of freedom is found in every heart.

This milestone is an opportunity to celebrate the Cuban culture and the many contributions Cuban Americans have made to the United States. By sharing your proud history with all Americans, you enrich our society and contribute to the diversity that makes our Nation great.

May God bless the Cuban people.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Deployment of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces Around the World May 20, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. combat-equipped armed forces around the world. This supplemental report covers operations in support of the global war on terrorism, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Global War on Terrorism

Since September 24, 2001, I have reported, consistent with Public Law 107-40 and the War Powers Resolution, on the combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters, which began on October 7, 2001, and the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat-support forces to a

number of locations in the Central, Pacific, and Southern Command areas of operation in support of those operations and of other operations in our global war on terrorism.

I will direct additional measures as necessary in the exercise of the U.S. right to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short-notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world. It is not possible to know at this time either the precise scope or duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States.

United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, continue to conduct the U.S. campaign to pursue al-Qaida terrorists and to eliminate support to al-Qaida.

These operations have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qaida's training capabilities. United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, ended the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and are actively pursuing and engaging remnant al-Qaida and Taliban fighters. Approximately 90 U.S. personnel are also assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council authorized the ISAF in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, and has reaffirmed its authorization since that time, most recently, for a 12-month period from October 13, 2004, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1563 of September 13, 2004. The mission of the ISAF under NATO command is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in creating a safe and secure environment that allows reconstruction and the reestablishment of Afghan authorities. Currently, all 26 NATO nations contribute to the ISAF. Ten non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military and other support personnel to the ISAF.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat-support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations since January 2002 continue to conduct secure detention operations for the approximately 520 enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

The U.N. Security Council authorized a Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq under unified command in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003, and reaffirmed its authorization in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004, noting the Iraqi Interim Government's request to retain the presence of the MNF. Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, the mission of the MNF is to contribute to the security and stability in Iraq, as reconstruction continues, until

the completion of Iraq's political transformation. These contributions include assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces and institutions, as the Iraqi people, represented by the Transitional National Assembly, draft a constitution and establish a constitutionally elected government. The U.S. contribution to the MNF is approximately 139,000 military personnel.

In furtherance of our efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, our friends and allies, and our forces abroad, the United States continues to work with friends and allies in areas around the globe. United States combat-equipped and combat-support forces are located in the Horn of Africa region, and the U.S. forces headquarters element in Djibouti provides command and control support as necessary for military operations against al-Qaida and other international terrorists in the Horn of Africa region, including Yemen. These forces also assist in enhancing counterterrorism capabilities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Eritrea, and Djibouti. In addition, the United States continues to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the areas of responsibility of all of the geographic combatant commanders. These maritime operations have the responsibility to stop the movement, arming, or financing of international terrorists.

NATO-Led Kosovo Force (KFOR)

As noted in previous reports regarding U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo, the U.N. Security Council authorized Member States to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999. The mission of KFOR is to provide an international security presence in order to deter renewed hostilities; verify and, if necessary, enforce the terms of the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (which is now Serbia and Montenegro); enforce the terms of the

Undertaking on Demilitarization and Transformation of the former Kosovo Liberation Army; provide day-to-day operational direction to the Kosovo Protection Corps; and maintain a safe and secure environment to facilitate the work of the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Currently, there are 23 NATO nations contributing to KFOR. Eleven non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military personnel and other support personnel to KFOR. The U.S. contribution to KFOR in Kosovo is about 1,700 U.S. military personnel, or approximately 10 per-cent of KFOR's total strength of approximately 17,000 personnel. Additionally, U.S. military personnel occasionally operate from Macedonia, Albania, and Greece in support of KFOR operations.

The U.S. forces have been assigned to a sector principally centered around Gnjilane in the eastern region of Kosovo. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, maintaining a safe and secure environment remains the primary military task. The KFOR operates under NATO command and control and rules of engagement. The KFOR coordinates with and supports UNMIK at most levels; provides a security presence in towns, villages, and the countryside; and organizes checkpoints and patrols in key areas to provide security, protect minorities, resolve disputes, and help instill in the community a feeling of confidence.

In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244, UNMIK continues to transfer additional competencies to the Kosovar Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, which includes the President, Prime Minister, multiple ministries, and the Kosovo Assembly. The UNMIK retains ultimate authority in some sensitive areas such as police, justice, and ethnic minority affairs.

NATO continues formally to review KFOR's mission at 6-month intervals. These reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements,

force structure, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. NATO has adopted the Joint Operations Area plan to regionalize and rationalize its force structure in the Balkans. The UNMIK international police and the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) have full responsibility for public safety and policing throughout Kosovo except in the area of South Mitrovica, where KFOR and UNMIK share this responsibility due to security concerns. The UNMIK international police and KPS also have begun to assume responsibility for guarding patrimonial sites and established border-crossing checkpoints. The KFOR augments security in particularly sensitive areas or in response to particular threats as needed.

NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Pursuant to the June 2004 decision made by NATO Heads of State and Government, and in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1575 of November 22, 2004, NATO concluded its Stabilization Force (SFOR) operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and established NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo to continue to assist in implementing the Peace Agreement in conjunction with a newly established European Force (EUFOR). NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo, to which approximately 235 U.S. personnel are assigned, is, with EUFOR, the legal successor to SFOR. The principal tasks of NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo are providing advice on defense reform and performing operational supporting tasks, such as counterterrorism and supporting the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to

these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address *May 21, 2005*

Good morning. Today I can report to you that we are making good progress in advancing the cause of freedom, defeating the forces of terror, and transforming our military so we can meet the emerging threats of the 21st century. As I speak, Laura is in the Middle East to help advance the freedom agenda, and her message is a powerful one, that by working together for liberty, we will create a future of peace and opportunity for women and men worldwide.

On Monday, I will meet Afghan President Hamid Karzai at the White House to discuss freedom's remarkable progress in his nation. Afghanistan now has a constitution and an elected President, and its citizens will return to the polls this September to elect provincial councils in the lower house of the National Assembly. We're helping Afghanistan's elected government solidify these democratic gains and deliver real change. A nation that once knew only the terror of the Taliban is now seeing a rebirth of freedom, and we will help them succeed.

Terrorists know that there is no room for them as freedom takes root in the broader Middle East, so they are fighting to stop its progress. But in recent weeks, we have dealt them a series of devastating blows. In Afghanistan, we have brought to justice dozens of terrorists and insurgents. In Pakistan, one of Usama bin Laden's senior terrorist leaders, a man named al-Libbi, was brought to justice. In Iraq, we captured two deputies of the terrorist Zarqawi, and our forces have killed or captured hundreds

of terrorists and insurgents near the Syrian border.

Our strategy is clear: We will fight the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. While some difficult days still lie ahead, these recent victories are making America safer and the world more secure.

As we make progress against today's enemies, we are also transforming our military to defeat the enemies we might face in the decades ahead. On Friday, I will speak to future leaders of our military who are graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy about how we are making our Armed Forces faster, more agile, and more lethal.

To deal with the emerging threats of the 21st century, we are building a military that can deploy rapidly and deliver more firepower with fewer forward-deployed forces. However, much of our military is still deployed in ways that reflect the threats of the cold war. So last summer, I announced a plan to reposition our forces over the next decade. This shift will bring home 60 to 70,000 uniformed personnel, while still maintaining a significant overseas presence. It will also allow us to reduce the stress on our military families and make the best overall use of our resources. In the months and years ahead, we will continue to do what is necessary to prepare our Armed Forces to protect the American people in this new century.

The war on terror continues, and we are making solid progress, but we must not become complacent. We will continue to pursue terrorists abroad. We will continue to

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