

Second Statement on Post-War Iraq

We write in strong support of efforts by Prime Minister Tony Blair to "get America and Europe working again together as partners and not as rivals." While some seem determined to create an ever deeper divide between the United States and Europe, and others seem indifferent to the long-term survival of the transatlantic partnership, we believe it is essential, even in the midst of war, to begin building a new era of transatlantic cooperation.

The place to begin is post-war Iraq. There should be no question of our common determination to help the Iraqi people establish a peaceful, stable, united, prosperous, and democratic Iraq free of weapons of mass destruction. We must help build an Iraq that is governed by a pluralistic system representative of all Iraqis and fully committed to the rule of law, the rights of all its citizens, and the betterment of all its people. Such an Iraq will be a force for regional stability rather than conflict and participate in the democratic development of the region.

The Iraqi people committed to a democratic future must be fully involved in this process in order for it to succeed. Consistent with security requirements, our goal should be to progressively transfer authority as soon as possible to enable Iraqis to control their own destiny. Millions of Iraqis are untainted by service to the Ba'athist dictatorship and are committed to the establishment of democratic institutions. It is these Iraqis - not Americans, Europeans or international bureaucrats - who should make political and economic decisions on behalf of Iraq.

Building a stable, peaceful and democratic Iraq is an immense task. It must be a cooperative effort that involves international organizations - UN relief agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other appropriate bodies - that can contribute the talent and resources necessary for success. It is therefore essential that these organizations be involved in planning now to ensure timely allocation of resources.

Of particular concern, the effort to rebuild Iraq should strengthen, not weaken transatlantic ties. The most important transatlantic institution is NATO, and the Alliance should assume a prominent role in post-war Iraq. Given NATO's capabilities and expertise, it should become integrally involved as soon as possible in the post-war effort. In particular, NATO should actively support efforts to secure and destroy all of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction stockpiles and production facilities (a task that should unite the United States, Canada and all European allies committed to peace and non-proliferation), ensure peace and stability are maintained in postwar Iraq, and assist in the rebuilding of Iraq's infrastructure and the delivery of humanitarian relief. The Atlantic Alliance has pledged to confront the new threats of the 21st century. No current challenge is more important than that of building a peaceful, unified and democratic Iraq without weapons of mass destruction on NATO's own borders.

Administration of post-war Iraq should from the beginning include not only Americans but officials from those countries committed to our goals in Iraq. Bringing different nationalities into the administrative organization is important because it allows us to draw on the expertise others have acquired from their own previous peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts. It will also facilitate closer and more effective ties between the security forces in post-war Iraq and those charged with administering the political and economic rebuilding of Iraq.

International support and participation in the post-Iraq effort would be much easier to achieve if the UN Security Council were to endorse such efforts. The United States should therefore seek passage of a Security Council resolution that endorses the establishment of a civilian administration in Iraq, authorizes the participation of UN relief and reconstruction agencies, welcomes the deployment of a security and stabilization force by NATO allies, and lifts all economic sanctions imposed following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait a decade ago.

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