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Office of the Press Secretary
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President Bush Meets with President Talabani of Iraq and Iraq Coalition

United Nations General Assembly
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7:08 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT BUSH: Mr. President, it is a pleasure to be with you and it's a pleasure to be with nations that have helped your democracy grow. A lot of people around the world have made sacrifices along with the Iraqi people to enable a country to emerge from the shadows of tyranny become a hopeful example for nations around the world.

I applaud your leadership, Mr. President. And I want to thank those around the table for showing courage and vision and resolve. Many of the troops of the countries represented here have returned home, but they have done so on success. And I want to applaud your steadfast leadership and thank the people of your respective countries for making the sacrifices so that others can live in a free society.

Mr. President, we've still got work to do -- but there is no doubt that the situation in Iraq has changed substantially. There's no doubt that mothers are able to send their child to school without fear of carnage. Oh, there are still killers amongst your -- in your midst, but your government has been steadfast in bringing people to justice who are trying to undermine your democracy.

So I look forward to working with you, and I thank you for being here, and I thank you for honoring those in this room today and the peoples of their country.

Mr. President.

PRESIDENT TALABANI: Mr. President, thank you for those kind words. And I'm here on behalf of the Iraqi people to express my deepest appreciation for all countries who participated in the breaking Iraq from worst kind of dictatorship.

Of course, noble and responsible nations must bear their sacrifice in order to free the oppressed and bring citizens from the worst kind of dictatorship. Nevertheless, on behalf of the people of Iraq, I want

to express my deepest condolences for your brave soldiers and civilians who have lost their lives while standing up for our shared values of freedom and democracy.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your brave leadership and your decision to liberate Iraq from worst kind of dictatorship. And thanks for all friends and their countries and governments who participated from the beginning to liberate our country and to bring a new Iraq, a democratic, federated. united, independent Iraq, which will help to promote democracy in the Middle East and help peace and security in the Middle East.

Thank you again, all of you, and you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, all.

END 7:11 P.M. EDT

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