



For Immediate Release
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President Bush Meets with President Zardari of Pakistan

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8:30 A.M. EDT

PRESIDENT BUSH: Mr. President, I thank you for coming. And I have really been looking forward to this meeting, after all, Pakistan is a close and important friend.

First of all, I want to express our deepest condolences to the victims of those who died as a result of the terrorist attack in Islamabad. I know that you -- your heart went out to the families of those who suffer and so does the collective heart of the American people; we stand with you.

PRESIDENT ZARDARI: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Secondly, I got to know you a little bit in an interesting way when I met your children at the Olympics. And it reminded me about the great suffering that they and you have been through with the loss of your beloved wife. And I thank you very much for staying involved in public service to honor her legacy.

Pakistan is an ally, and I look forward to deepening our relationship. We'll be discussing, of course, how to help spread prosperity. We want our friends around the world to be making a good living. We want there to be economic prosperity and we can work together, and of course we'll be talking about security. And your words have been very strong about Pakistan's sovereign right and sovereign duty to protect your country, and the United States wants to help.

One of the things I've heard here in my stay thus far in New York is from world leaders wondering whether or not the United States has the right plan to deal with this economic crisis. And I've assured them that the plan laid out by Secretary Paulson is a robust plan to deal with a serious problem. And now they're wondering about our Congress and I've assured them as well that having spoken to the leaders of the Congress from both political parties there is the desire to get something done quickly.



Now, there's a natural give-and-take when it comes to the legislative process. There are good ideas that need to be listened to in order to get a good bill out that will address the situation. But I'm confident, Mr. President, and as I've told you and other leaders, that there will be a bipartisan bill, that the Republicans and Democrats will come together to get this piece of legislation passed, which is necessary to address the financial situation and provide a rescue plan to make sure that there's some stability in the markets.

Anyway, Mr. President, thank you for coming.

PRESIDENT ZARDARI: Thank you. Thank you for your kind words. Thank you for your thoughts. As always, you prove to the world that your heart is in there for us Pakistanis, we respect your feelings, we respect the American ideals. And we bring to this the whole concept of your promise to the world of bringing democracy to Pakistan. Democracy has come full circle and it's been the help of all the friends around the world and we are thankful to the world for helping democracy.

And democracy is the answer. We will solve all the problems. We have a situation. We have issues. We've got problems. But we will solve them and we will rise to the occasion. That's what my wife's legacy is all about. That's what democracy is all about, to take difficult decisions and do the right thing for the people of our country and our two great nations. We should come together in this hard time and we will share the burden and the responsibility with the world.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, sir.

END 8:35 A.M. EDT

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