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Bush Thanks U.S., South Korean Troops for War Efforts

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 6, 2008 – During a visit today to the South Korean capital city of Seoul, President Bush thanked U.S. and South Korean troops for their efforts during the global war on terrorism.

Almost seven years after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, America remains at war with terrorism, Bush said at Yongsan Garrison. It is important, he said, that the United States continues to “use all assets of national power to keep the pressure on the enemy, to do our solemn duty to protect the American people from further harm.”

The anti-terror war is an ideological struggle, in which “the best way to yield the peace for our children and grandchildren is to understand the transformative power of freedom,” Bush said.

Bush thanked U.S. servicemembers “for being the carriers of freedom and liberty.” The president also thanked South Korean troops for their efforts in the Mideast.



“Some of Korea’s bravest citizens are working to spread the hope of freedom to other nations, especially in the Middle East,” Bush said. “Korean troops have served with courage alongside ours in Afghanistan and Iraq.”

The people of Afghanistan and Iraq “will always remember that the people of Korea stood with them in their time of need,” Bush said. “And they’ll always remember the contribution that our U.S. troops have made, as well.”

After the 9/11 attacks, U.S. and allied forces toppled the Taliban in Afghanistan and deposed Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Bush said.

“In Afghanistan, we removed a dangerous regime that harbored the terrorists who plotted the attacks on Sept. 11, and now we’re working to make sure Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists to plot against us,” he said. “In Iraq, we removed a dangerous regime that threatened its neighbors and the peace of the world. Removing Saddam Hussein was the right decision at the time, and it’s the right decision today.”



Bush acknowledged the fight against al-Qaida terrorists and other extremists in Iraq has been tough. However, he added, "events have turned toward victory" in Iraq since the surge of forces was launched last year.

"The enemy is on the run. Violence is down. Iraqi forces are assuming more responsibility in the fight," Bush said. "Because of this progress, our troops have begun to come home under the policy of return on success."

America will continue to stand with the Iraqi people and will continue to support the men and women in the U.S. military, he vowed. "And we will defeat the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them at home," he said.

The president also thanked U.S. troops for their service and sacrifice.

"As I leave this peninsula for probably my last time as your president, I go with confidence in our mission,

confidence in our country, and with great gratitude in my heart for everyone who wears our nation's uniform.

"Thank you for what you're doing," the president continued. "May God bless you. May God bless the people here. And may God continue to bless the United States of America."

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESIDENT'S SPEECH <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080806-4.html>