



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

November 21, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

From: The Attorney General

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ashcroft", written over the printed name "The Attorney General".

This week, the United States Congress, in a bipartisan majority vote, gave final approval to President Bush's proposal to create a new Department of Homeland Security. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security begins a new era of cooperation and coordination in the nation's homeland defense. The President's plan will allow us to improve our efforts to work together to identify and assess threats to our homeland, match these threats to our vulnerabilities, and act to ensure the safety and security of the American people.

Understandably, many will have questions about what the creation of this new department will mean for you and other employees at the Department of Justice. A team of federal employees, including representatives from Justice, has been developing plans to ensure a smooth and effective transition. Once the President signs the legislation into law, there will be a 60-day period before the new department is formally established. Agencies that will become part of the Department of Homeland Security will be transferred some time during a one-year transition period. In the interim, I ask each of you to remain focused daily on your critical mission: to protect Americans against future acts of terrorism and to bring terrorists to justice.

While the transition to the new department will undoubtedly present new challenges, it also presents outstanding new opportunities. From the beginning, the President has regarded this new department as a critical component of our nation's efforts to protect itself against terrorism. He is committed to making it both an effective part of our government and an excellent place to work for federal employees. A website has been set up specifically to provide you with transition updates. It may be found at www.dhs.gov/employees. In addition, do not hesitate to direct questions to your human resources representative.

The security of our homeland depends on our continued vigilance and dedication to our critical mission. Thank you for your continued service to all Americans.