



For Immediate Release
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Fact Sheet: Strengthening the Forces of Freedom and Prosperity in the Asia Pacific

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President Bush Supports APEC Nations Working To Uphold Democratic Values, Help Build And Sustain Free Societies

Today, President Bush Addressed The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Summit And Reiterated America's Commitment To Help Strengthen The Expansion Of Freedom And Prosperity In The Region. The expansion of freedom and democracy in the Asia Pacific region is one of the great stories of our time. At the end of World War II, Australia and New Zealand were the only democracies in the region, but we have since witnessed Japan's transformation into a thriving free society, the triumph of democracy in the Philippines, democratic transitions in Taiwan, South Korea, and Indonesia, and the birth of a new democratic nation in East Timor.

- **The United States Is Proposing The Creation Of A New Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership.** This new partnership will provide a venue in which free nations will work together to support democratic values, strengthen democratic institutions, and assist those who are working to build and sustain free societies across the Asia Pacific region.

The Expansion Of Trade And Investment Will Help Strengthen Freedom And Prosperity In The Asia Pacific Region

The United States Has Both The Will And The Flexibility To Help Conclude A Successful Doha Round - And We Will Work Steadfastly With Our APEC Partners In This Vital Effort. The Doha round of trade negotiations represents a once-in-a-generation chance to open markets and help millions rise from poverty. The U.S. is committed to seizing this opportunity, but we need partners in the Asia Pacific region to help lead the effort.

- **The U.S. Supports The Vision Of A Free Trade Area Of The Asia Pacific Region.** This free trade area would incorporate all willing APEC economies and reduce barriers to trade and investment across the entire Asia Pacific.
- **The U.S. Is Also Reaching Bilateral Trade Agreements With Individual Nations Across The Asia Pacific.** Today, the U.S. has free trade agreements with Australia, Singapore, Canada, Mexico, and Chile, and we recently concluded free trade agreements with two more APEC countries: South Korea and Peru.

The U.S. Will Work With APEC Countries To Address The Challenge Of Global Climate Change And Energy Security

Under Prime Minister Howard's Leadership, APEC Is Discussing And Developing A Practical Set Of Priorities For Cooperation On Energy Security, Clean Development, And Climate Change. The work done at APEC will make an important contribution to UN discussions about a new framework on energy security and climate change.

- **Later This Month, The United States Will Convene The First Series Of Meetings Of The Nations That Consume The Most Energy And Produce The Most Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Including Nations With Rapidly Growing Economies Like India And China.** The U.S. will work with these nations to reach agreement in 2008 on a detailed plan for future action.

The U.S. And APEC Countries Are Standing Side By Side In The Global War On Terror

APEC Nations Are Making Our World Safer By Helping People In The Middle East Build Free And Hopeful Societies That Fight The Terrorists Instead Of Harboring Them.

- In Afghanistan, forces from Australia, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand, and Singapore are helping the Afghan people build a free nation and stop the Taliban and al Qaeda from returning to power.
- In Lebanon, forces from Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and China are serving as part of the United Nations force that is helping to bring stability to a free nation threatened by radical regimes and terrorist violence.
- In Iraq, personnel from Australia, Japan, and South Korea are helping Iraq's democratically elected government rebuild from the rubble of tyranny and stop al Qaeda from turning that country into a terrorist safe haven.

The Fight Against The Terrorists In The Asia Pacific Region Is One Of The Untold Success Stories Of The War On Terror - And The Rest Of The World Has A Lot To Learn From The Approach To Terrorism Taken In This Region.

Nations in the Asia Pacific region have followed a clear strategy to defeat extremists:

1) Arresting And Killing Key Leaders And Operatives Of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) And The Filipino Terrorist Group Abu Sayyaf, The Two Most Dangerous Terrorist Networks In The Asia Pacific.

- In 2003, a senior JI leader named Hambali was captured, severing the main link between JI and al Qaeda.
- Just a few months ago, Indonesian forces tracked down and captured JI's emir and JI's top military commander.
- The Philippines' military launched a campaign called Operation Ultimatum that aggressively targeted Abu Sayyaf leaders and killed both the group's top leader and his closest advisor.

2) Providing Economic Assistance To Struggling Communities Where The Terrorists Operate. This assistance is strengthening moderate leaders and giving citizens alternatives to the path of radicalism and violence. For example:

- Indonesia's government is working with the United States to implement a \$157 million initiative to improve basic education in 1,500 public and private schools.
- In the Southern Philippines, the government has worked with international donors to build roads, bridges, schools, and health clinics and to provide small loans to help local entrepreneurs in Muslim communities exploited by terrorists.

3) Increasing Regional Cooperation In The Fight Against Terrorism.

- With the support of the international community, nations in Southeast Asia have established a joint counter-terrorism training center in Malaysia and law enforcement training centers in Jakarta and Bangkok that are improving capabilities of security forces from across the region.
- Last year, ASEAN nations concluded a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty that will improve the sharing of evidence in terrorist investigations.
- In June, foreign ministers from across the region held a counter-terrorism conference in Jakarta to discuss

ways to improve cooperation in the battle against terrorists..

4) Working To Defeat The Terrorists' Hateful Ideology.

- Indonesian President Yudhoyono hosted an interfaith dialogue soon after taking office where he called on his fellow citizens to ensure that "the forces of light, reason, and hope overpower the forces of darkness, despair, and violence."
- Malaysian Prime Minister Badawi is working to promote "Civilizational Islam" and has called on his fellow Malaysians to "show by example that a Muslim country can be modern, democratic, tolerant, and economically competitive."
- Philippine President Arroyo has reached out to Muslim leaders and has called Filipinos of all religions to oppose "terrorists who kill, bomb, and maim to enforce an ideology of evil."

The Vision Of Freedom And Prosperity Must Be Extended Throughout The Rest Of This Region

We Must Work For The Day When The People Of North Korea Enjoy The Same Freedoms As The Citizens In Asia's Democracies.

We Must Press The Regime In Burma To Stop Arresting, Harassing, And Assaulting Pro-Democracy Activists For Organizing Or Participating In Peaceful Demonstrations. The Burmese regime must release these activists immediately, stop its intimidation of those Burmese citizens who are promoting democracy and human rights, and release all political prisoners - including Aung San Suu Kyi.

We Will Continue To Work With Nations Like Russia To Advance Our Shared Interests In The World - While Encouraging Russia's Leaders To Respect The Checks And Balances That Are Essential To Democracy.

We Will Encourage Nations With Whom We Have Strong Relations, Such As China, To Open Up Their Political Systems And Give Greater Voice To Their People.

We Look Forward To Free And Fair Elections In Thailand.

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