



## Remarks with Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek

### Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Prague, Czech Republic  
July 8, 2008

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you, very much, Minister. (Inaudible) for a press conference. Prague is a wonderful and a beautiful city and it's great to be here.

I'm looking forward to my time here in Prague. Later today, of course, we will sign an agreement on basing a radar facility in the Czech Republic that is part of a broader defensive system to promote and enhance NATO alliance security. This missile defense agreement is significant as a building block not just for the security of the United States and of the Czech Republic, but for the security of NATO and ultimately, for the security of the international community as a whole, because we do face important threats. Ballistic missile proliferation is not an imaginary threat. As we know, the Iranians continue defiance of international obligations to suspend their enrichment and reprocessing. But they also continue apace in their missile development, and so we need to be prepared for that threat.



The ability of the alliance to operate effectively and for member states to act freely and in harmony depends on strong, mutually reinforced, multiple-layered defense capabilities, and that's why this agreement is so important.

But this is a trip that is about much more than missile defense. It is also about the extraordinary march to democracy that has taken place here in the Czech Republic. I know that the missile defense agreement is subject to the approval of your parliament. That in and of itself, is a very strong sign and signal and victory for democracy. Because in democracies that is how these things are done. And so I look forward to meeting with your parliamentarians later.

The Czech Republic, of course, has been through so much. In its history, so many times denied freedom, but with freedom always ringing deeply in the heart of the Czech people. And as the Prime Minister and I were sitting down to speak, I wanted to say just one thing to him, that I want to repeat here, which is that the Czech people have now secured their freedom, they have secured it here in the Czech Republic, they have secured it in their membership in the European Union, they have secured it in their membership at NATO. But they have not been satisfied to remain only as free people, but have been determined to help extend the blessings of liberty to others. And so we greatly value our partnership in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and the strong voice that the Czech Republic has been for the people of Belarus and of Cuba.

And so thank you, Prime Minister, for being here and for having me here. And thank you so much for being such a good friend of the United States.

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