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## President Bush Welcomes Prime Minister Sanader of Croatia to the White House

Oval Office

 [In Focus: Global Diplomacy](#)

3:16 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT BUSH: It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Croatia here. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. We just had a very lengthy and interesting discussion, which is what you'd expect friends to do. I consider the Prime Minister a friend; I consider Croatia a friend, as well.



**VIDEO** **Multimedia**

President's Remarks

 [view](#)

We talked about foreign policy issues, issues of peace. I thank the people of Croatia for their support in Afghanistan of a young democracy. I also believe it's in the world's interest that Croatia join NATO, as well as the European Union. To that end, when I go to Riga, I will make the case that Croatia should be admitted. It seems like a reasonable date would be 2008.

We talked about bilateral relations. We talked about investments, investment opportunities in Croatia. We talked about the need to enhance trade and commerce.

The Prime Minister has invited me to come. I've heard unbelievably great things about your country, Mr. Prime Minister. I hear it's one of the most beautiful places on the face of the Earth. I'd love to come sometime. I've got to clear it first with my wife. (Laughter.)

But nevertheless, all in all, it's been a very good meeting. And I welcome you here and thank you for coming.



PRIME MINISTER SANADER: Thank you, Mr. President. I've been touched by the warmth of this reception during this visit and of the interest and understanding you have shown in Croatia and the challenges facing Europe today.

About the only question we disagreed was whether Croatia or the United States had the most beautiful coastline. (Laughter.) I will let you and Mrs. Bush judge for yourselves when you visit Croatia, where you certainly will be most welcome, Mr. President.

The President and I, we discussed a range of issues of bilateral concerns, especially of the preparations of my country to join EU and NATO. And I expressed my gratitude to the President for his constant support for Croatia on its way.

I also -- we discussed a range of issues of -- regarding our region of Southeastern Europe, final status of Kosovo, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova. We are very active. Croatia is not forgetting that we are in the region where we still need a strong U.S. and European cooperation. We believe strongly in trans-Atlantic partnership. There is no alternative to this. I think that President Bush and the United States of America, along with the EU, have still to be very, very closely cooperating in a couple of issues in Europe.

So thank you very much, Mr. President, for warm reception and very fruitful discussion.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, sir.

END 3:20 P.M. EDT

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