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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
May 23, 2002

President Bush Meets with German Chancellor Schroeder

Remarks by President Bush and Chancellor Schroeder of Germany in Press Availability

[Kanzleramt](#)

Berlin, Germany

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1:28 P.M. (Local)

CHANCELLOR SCHROEDER: (in progress) -- welcome you most warmly here to the garden of the Chancellery. We have exceedingly been looking forward to this visit of the U.S. American President George W. Bush. And the results of our conversations I think are such that we have every reason to be pleased.

U.S. American are in an exceedingly healthy state.

It's a very friendly atmosphere; that has become abundantly clear in all of our conversations. But I also think that there is a tremendous amount of agreement between the two of us and our two countries as regards the assessment of the situation around the world.

Now, to begin with, we have started to talk about very intensely about the U.S. American-European relations. I think what the American President and the Russian President have agreed together regarding questions of disarmament, but also regarding the process of approachment of Russia towards NATO, that that is of historic importance. And I would very much say -- and we both agreed that this process is going to be topped by what we're going to be doing in Rome on the 28th of May, together. The world is going to be a safer place for it, and I think it's a tremendous success not only of America, but of this special U.S. American President.

We then, obviously, talked about the ongoing necessity to continue with our joint fight against international terrorism. And I have been able to brief the President about my visit to Kabul and about the necessity of maintaining the protection force on the ground, the ISAF. They are the force to guarantee a minimum of security, and therefore, a minimum perspective of hope of reconstruction for people in this country. This is also important -- we want to rebuild economic and social structures in the country.

We're very much in agreement that we have every reason to trust the interim government with Interim President Karzai, and to give them all of the support that they need to move their country forward as a way of their own momentum.

Now, we very much agree that it is necessary and important to make sure we move the peace process forward in the Middle East. I have emphasized very strongly that the President's speech in Washington was a milestone regarding this situation. He went in and made it abundantly clear what we all believe in -- at least we, too, certainly believe in that Israel has got a guaranteed -- right of safe existence within strong and reliable borders. But it needs to be recognized by all of its neighbors and that by the end of the day, certainly there is going to be an independent Palestinian state, too.

And we're very much agreed that this is a job to be done by the international community of states. certainly, by means of the Quartet that arose from Madrid: the United States of America, the United Nations, Europe and Russia. Now, this Quartet is hopefully going to