

people, will overcome them as we have triumphed over other challenges in the past 2 years. To succeed, we ask for your continued investment. Afghanistan is open for business and American companies are most welcome. Together we will make Afghanistan a great success and an enduring example of a prosperous democratic society.

Our shared success in Afghanistan is vital to achieving victory over the greatest menace the world faces today, terrorism and extremism.

Long before the horrific tragedy of September 11, terrorists subjected the people of Afghanistan to unspeakable brutality and oppression. Even though we were among the most pious Muslims in the world, we were the first and foremost victims of al Qaeda. In the name of Islam, a religion of peace and tolerance, they terrorized and killed the Muslim people of Afghanistan and deprived us of our basic rights. These atrocities continued for many years, and the world remained unengaged.

The tragedy of September 11 once again tied the destinies of our two nations. You came to Afghanistan to defeat terrorism, and we Afghans welcomed and embraced you for the liberation of our country. Together we ended the rule of terrorism.

Ladies and gentlemen, this was not the first time America confronted a great evil and rescued the world. Two weeks ago, on Memorial Day, you remembered the hundreds of thousands of American soldiers who gave their lives for defending democracy and freedom around the world. You led the world in eliminating fascism. You stood with the Afghan nation in our heroic fight against the former Soviet Union. Just last week, we honored one of our great fellow freedom fighters in that struggle, the late President Ronald Reagan.

Today, the United States is once again leading the global effort to defeat terrorism and extremism. Afghanistan is a central front in the war against terrorism. The Afghan people are and will remain with you in this struggle.

Ladies and gentlemen, in this great Chamber, in the House of the American people, democracy and liberty thrive. Afghans are honored to have become partners in this noble tradition. The Afghan people will not forget your help and will always remember and cherish your friendship. The Afghan people desire to further build on this solid foundation of mutual trust and friendship by creating a strong partnership between our two nations.

We must build a partnership that will consolidate our achievements and enhance stability, prosperity, and democracy in Afghanistan and in the region. This requires sustaining and accelerating the reconstruction of Afghanistan through long-term commitment, a free trade agreement between the United States and Afghanistan, and providing incentives to the private sector for investing in Afghanistan. We must enhance our strategic partner-

ship. The security of our two nations is intertwined.

In December of 2001, a U.S. bomb went astray and exploded a few meters from where I was staying. This was the last day of our resistance against the Taliban. This was the day that the Bonn process announced me as the chairman. This was the day the Taliban were to come and surrender. This was also the day that the stray bomb came to us and killed more than 20 of my people and also four U.S. soldiers. In the midst of all that confusion and pain, an old man walked up to me. I did not know him. I had not seen him before, and I have not seen him since then. He came to me and said, "Mr. Karzai, go to the Americans. Tell them that in a war like this, things like that happen. Tell them not to lose heart. Tell them that we shall continue to fight and we must win."

Ladies and gentlemen, upon my arrival in the United States last week I stopped at Fort Drum, New York, to meet some of your troops who had served in Afghanistan. Senator CLINTON graciously came to receive us. We honored two American soldiers who recently returned from Afghanistan and who a few months ago in Kandahar were traveling in a vehicle. Somebody, a terrorist, threw a grenade at them. The grenade landed in their vehicle. They took the grenade. Instead of throwing it into the street where there were people around them, civilians, these heroic men stuck the grenade under their seat. The grenade exploded. Fortunately, they survived. But they were badly injured. To us, this was also an example of heroism and care for humanity, and we are proud of these two American soldiers. These stories tell a tale of partnership, tell a tale of joint struggle, tell a tale of care and courage and care for humanity.

Ladies and gentlemen, together we have a long road ahead, but we will move forward to make the world a better place. For us in Afghanistan, we remember you for every help that you have given us, and we will have that in our books written in golden letters. This road, this journey is one of success and victory. We will continue to triumph and win the war against terrorism and make the world a better place for us and the rest of the world. May God bless America and Afghanistan and our two nations. Thank you very much.

[Applause, Members rising.]

At 9 o'clock and 56 minutes a.m., His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

#### JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 9 o'clock and 58 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess until 10:30 a.m.

□ 1030

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BASS) at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.

#### PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING THE RECESS

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

#### CONTRIBUTION OF AMIGOS FOR KIDS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, our children are the hope of our world. "Los ninos son la esperanza del mundo," said Jose Marti, the Cuban freedom fighter; and from humble beginnings that helped to form their character, they become tomorrow's leaders.

Amigos for Kids, a most worthy non-profit organization in my hometown of Miami, Florida, is helping our precious youth to realize their true potential, a potential that may never have been uncovered without the intervention of such esteemed individuals such as Jorge Plasencia, a dear friend of mine and cofounder of the organization.

Jorge is an outstanding member of our south Florida community and founded Amigos in response to the diverse needs of the abused, neglected, and less fortunate children and their families. Throughout his 13-year history, Amigos has come to the aid of many of the children through education, prevention and community involvement. Jorge's hard work with Amigos is a testament to his strength and unwavering commitment to our cherished children.

Muchisimas Gracias, Jorge. Thank you so much for your help to our south Florida's children.