

2003 Madrid donors' conference, Turkey generously pledged to donate \$50 million in aid over 5 years. In addition, Turkish businesses are functioning in Iraq and helping to provide fuel, electricity, and water to the Iraqi people. And many brave Turkish men and women have given the ultimate sacrifice to help build Iraq's nascent democracy. We honor them for their courage.

Turkey's contribution to the reconstruction project in Afghanistan must also not be overlooked. Turkey has taken the lead for the International Security Assistance Force twice in the last 3 years, most recently in February of this year.

And we must not forget that Turkey had been challenged by terrorism at home by the PKK for years before 9/11. Turkey is threatened today as well. Some PKK terrorists are seeking safe haven in northern Iraq, and so I urge the administration and the Iraqi government to take more aggressive action against the terrorists, and deny them any safe haven from which to launch attacks.

Since 9/11, Turkey has also been the target of al-Qaida. In November 2003, 62 people were killed and more than 700 injured in multiple bombings in Istanbul. It was a tragic event that saddened and angered the world, and fortified our resolve to win the war on terror.

Turkey has been a dedicated and reliable ally. Our intelligence communities are in close contact in this war, and Turkey has been instrumental in capturing terrorists, disrupting their logistics and planning, and dismantling their vast financial networks.

I am confident that Turkey will remain determined and resolute in the war on terror, and that enhanced cooperation between our two countries will prove to be fruitful. Turkey's role as a vital and strategic ally can only be enhanced by its membership in the European Union. The United States strongly supports this.

On December 17 last year, EU member states accepted the recommendation of the European commission for the commencement of accession negotiations with Turkey. These talks are scheduled to begin in October. In order to reach this stage, the Turkish government has undertaken sweeping reforms to fulfill the political and economic criteria for membership in the EU.

Since October of 2001, the Turkish parliament has passed nine reform packages to bring Turkish laws into line with EU benchmarks—five under the leadership of Prime Minister Endrogan. Reforms include the legalization of Kurdish broadcasting and education, the enhancement of freedoms of speech and association, greater civilian control over the military, and more thorough and transparent investigations into allegations of human rights abuses. It is crucial that Turkey continue to take steps to meet all of

the EU's criteria. This will allow the United States to remain a steady and effective supporter of Turkey's ambitions to join the EU.

Turkey's accession to the EU will have a profound impact on Muslim populations within Europe, in the broader Middle East and beyond. It will further demonstrate that democratic governance and respect for the rule of law are not unique to one religion or one culture, but are the birthright of all peoples everywhere. Just as the people of Iraq, Lebanon, and Afghanistan are setting a remarkable example for the entire Middle East, Turkey's membership in the EU will inspire hope throughout the entire Muslim world.

And, finally, as a secular democracy with a predominantly Muslim population, Turkey's membership in the EU—as in NATO—will demonstrate the United States' and Europe's commitment to diversity and tolerance.

We may not always agree on the same course of action—and sometimes we may not agree on the same ends—but Turkey has, for decades, been a friend. And it has consistently expressed its dedication to the values, ideals, and interests that the United States holds dear.

Like the United States, Turkey is committed to a democratic Iraq that respects the rights of its own people and is at peace with its neighbors. It is committed to a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in which two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side-by-side in peace and security. It stands against Iran's nuclear ambitions, and squarely for victory in the war against terror.

The United States and Turkey share the same objectives: peace, security, and the spread of freedom and opportunity.

The partnership between the United States and Turkey has survived disagreements in the past and has been consistently vital in the pursuit of our shared interests. The key has always been strong leadership at the highest levels that articulates our partnership and defends the bilateral ties that help us advance our common goals.

Today, we face a golden opportunity to move beyond recent tensions and strengthen our partnership. The first step is for Prime Minister Erdogan to speak clearly in defense of our partnership, and to dispel a wave of anti-Americanism that runs counter to the last 5 decades of cooperation.

I'm confident that the prime minister will do so during his visit this week, and when he returns home to Turkey. And I'm confident that the United States-Turkish partnership will endure as we confront the challenges of the 21st century together.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Chair inform me as to what the situation is concerning morning business or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We are supposed to go into executive session at this time.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Chair.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### NOMINATION OF JANICE ROGERS BROWN TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will go into executive session to resume consideration of calendar No. 72, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Janice Rogers Brown, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon shall be equally divided for debate between the two leaders or their designees, provided that the last 20 minutes prior to the vote be divided, with 10 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, to be followed by 10 minutes under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The assistant Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, under the order, the time is equally divided; is that right?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. DURBIN. I seek recognition under the terms of that order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois, the assistant Democratic leader, is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am sorry that this day has come. Janice Rogers Brown is one of President Bush's most ideological and extreme judicial nominees. This is not just my opinion. I invite anyone, please, read her speeches, read her opinions. They reflect the views of a judicial activist and a person who is, in fact, an ideological warrior. They reflect the views of someone who is outside of the mainstream of American thought. They reflect the views of someone who should not be given a lifetime appointment to the second highest court in America—a court second only to the United States Supreme Court.

I am a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I served as the ranking Democrat at Justice Brown's hearing in October of 2003. I asked her a lot of questions. Her answers offered little assurance that she will be anything but a judicial activist with a far-right agenda.