Mr. President, as the U.S. Senate gets started for the

second legislative session of the 109th Congress, I would like to take

this opportunity and concentrate our attention on the milestones

achieved in the global war on terror and take a look at the road ahead.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, we and many others in the

international community have been united in our effort to defeat

terrorism wherever it has taken hold in the world. September 11 proved

without a doubt that a network of extremists preaching hate and

oppression were determined to cause our Nation great harm. It is clear

these extremists were and continue to be committed to nothing less than

the total destruction of our Nation and our way of life. This network

of terrorism is embedded in many countries. It has penetrated hard

working communities, valued institutions of education, and sacred

places of worship.

As in any previous world conflicts, the global war on terror cannot

be successfully prosecuted without extensive cooperation of the members

of the international community. Given the potential catastrophic

consequences of terrorist attacks, President Bush worked with our

international partners and allies to identify terrorist networks,

reduce their ability to communicate and coordinate their plans, and

disrupt attacks before they occur.

With America in the lead, a full scale international campaign began

in 2001. A total of 136 countries, including members of the European

Union, Russia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Australia, countries of Asia and

Africa provided and, in many instances, still continue to provide a

range of intelligence and/or military assistance. As a result of this

unprecedented multilateral cooperation, we have been able to kill or

capture more than one half of the known al Qaida leaders and prevent

possible terrorist attacks both in the U.S. and abroad.

Despite the many difficulties in this war, our Nation has not

retreated nor walked away in the face of adversity. We sought out

terrorists, cut off their funding, and disrupted their plans. Under the

steadfast leadership of President Bush our country has taken the battle

to the enemy and achieved significant successes.

In October 2001, the coalition forces launched a military campaign

against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The regime was successfully

removed from power and all known al Qaida training camps were

destroyed.

With the help from the international community, the people of

Afghanistan, many for the first time in the history of their nation,

tasted the initial seeds of freedom. Let me pause here for a second.

For the first time in history millions of people in Afghanistan are now

able to express their opinions without a fear of retribution or

punishment.

After several national elections, the people of Afghanistan adopted a

new constitution, elected a president and held successful parliamentary

elections. Efforts to revitalize Afghanistan's economy and education

system have already produced significant results. Agricultural

production, which is a way of life for 70 percent of Afghanistan's

people, has nearly doubled. New roads are being built. Teachers are

being trained and an increasing number of people, including women, have

access to education.

Afghanistan was devastated by decades of war and neglect and is now

being turned into a young democracy that will be an example to others

in the troubled region.

A year after September 11, the President challenged the United

Nations to confront another protector of terror: Saddam Hussein. Saddam

Hussein failed to comply with more than a dozen of United Nations

Security Council resolutions and he gave every appearance of continuing

to hide large stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.

Based on Saddam's reported weapons of mass destruction and support

for terrorism, Iraq represented a dangerous nexus that the

international community could no longer ignore. President Bush bravely

made the decision to liberate Iraq from the most brutal regime in the

country's history and plant the seeds of freedom in the land that had

only known decades of tyranny and oppression.

It is clear today that the terrorists view Iraq as the major

battleground against the coalition forces, against the rule of law, and

against peace and prosperity. During the last 2 years they have tried

to derail the democratic process and threatened to kill those

participating in it. Undeterred, the majority of the Iraqi people have

bravely ignored this threat and joined the emerging Iraqi political

process.

By the millions, Iraqis lined up to choose a transitional government

that

drafted the most democratic constitution in the Arab world. By the

millions, Iraqis approved that constitution in a national referendum.

And by the millions, Iraqis elected a new Iraqi government under the

Iraqi-written constitution for the Iraqi people. Let there be no doubt

about it: the establishment of a meaningful political process and

lasting democratic institutions will decide Iraq's future.

We can be proud of the fact that each national vote in Iraq has

experienced less violence and produced bigger and broader voter

turnout. President Bush put it best when he stated:

Iraqi security forces continue to show improvements in defending

their fellow countrymen. In October of last year, Iraqi police and army

personnel secured polling sites around the country, quickly suppressing

any incidents of violence.

Growing in size and strength, Iraqi military units have become more

capable and able to defend their country's emerging democracy. Today,

Iraqi security battalions have assumed control over entire sectors of

Iraq. These accomplishments demonstrate the willingness of Iraqis to

stand up to insurgents and protect their fellow countrymen. Iraqis are

gradually taking over the frontline in defense of their communities.

With each Iraqi soldier trained and equipped to carry out the

mission, Iraq draws closer to being able to stand on its own and

protect its own freedom.

A free society cannot exist without an independent and impartial

judicial system. With slow but steady progress on all fronts, the Iraqi

people are carefully building one of the country's most important

institutions: its judiciary. With the help from the international

community, the Iraqi people have begun the trial of one of the most

brutal dictators in history, Saddam Hussein. Although none of Hussein's

victims had a luxury of due process, the new Iraqi government decided

to adhere to the highest standard of the rule of law and allowed its

former dictator to stand trial by his peers.

None of these successes would have been possible if not for the

sacrifice of America's finest men and women in uniform. Their pride,

patriotism and perseverance have been the deciding factor on the

battlefields far away from home. They have answered the call of duty in

a noble but difficult task. Some have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Their families will always be in our thoughts and prayers. We should

honor their lives by defeating the terrorists.

The successful strategy for prosecuting the global war on terror set

forth by President Bush is steadily moving forward. The road ahead will

require additional sacrifice from America's leaders, members of the

military and the American people. We must continue to unite behind our

Commander-In-Chief, make the necessary adjustments, and move forward on

the path of complete victory. The Global War on Terror demands nothing

less.