Mr. President, I wish to join my colleagues in

commemorating the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11,

2001. Twelve years ago America was dealt a blow, but in the years

since, we have continued to rebuke the message of hate that was brought

to our doorstep. What is more is that we affirm our core American

values that were magnified in the days following those attacks.

We are still

We are still a diverse nation of many races,

religions, and ideas united under the same flag. Maybe most important,

we are still at our best when we come together.

Every year we are reminded that though we are a strong and determined

nation, we are still healing from the wounds we suffered that day 12

years ago. No amount of time can rationalize the senseless violence or

bring back a loved one. It is important to note that we have brought

many of the terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, to justice, and we

have made great strides in ensuring that those who wish to do us harm

like they did on 9/11 will be unable to do so.

Our men and women in uniform, the intelligence community, Foreign

Service officers, and the people entrusted with safeguarding our

borders, bridges, air and seaports and key infrastructure, have made

great sacrifices to ensure our continued safety in a

post-9/11 world and we owe so much to these men and women, and the

families who support them.

Today, we join together to show the world that our Nation is united

and firmly resolved to defend our freedom and safeguard our liberty

against any enemy.

We also take time to remember those Americans who perished on 9/11

and to remember them and their families with a special prayer. We

reflect on the heroism of the firefighters, police officers, medical

workers, city officials, and ordinary citizens who gave their own lives

trying to save others. Who could ever forget the images of firefighters

and other first responders going up the stairs of the World Trade

Center as everyone else was heading to safety? Each of us has been

affected by 9/11. It is a day seared into the national memory.

We cannot forget 9/11 because the virtues that carried us though the

days, weeks, and years have been with us since the beginning: 9/11 did

not teach firefighters and police to sacrifice, nor did it teach unity

among neighbors. It did not teach empathy toward strangers or

compassion toward friends.

Rather, these quintessential American virtues were with us all along;

9/11 just put them under a spotlight for all to see. On 9/11 we showed

the world a brand of resilience, compassion, and strength that could

only be

And so, 12 years after the most heinous attacks in our Nation's

history, we stand tall. We stand tall, not weighed down by the gravity

of 9/11 but made stronger by it. We remain united in our diversity like

no other nation on Earth,