**The Lebanese Information Center in the US on President Bush's inaugural address**
**"A Calling for America, A Pledge to the World"**
*January 28, 2005*

*"Fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable, and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause"*.

Such statements from the President's inaugural speech are most meaningful to those of us who were once deprived of their freedoms in their native lands and who still have relatives and friends living under the deadly threats of the ideologies of exclusion and intolerance, and the cruelty of totalitarian regimes. President Bush has simply and eloquently elucidated the principles stimulating the United States' current and future foreign policy. He expressed an ideology based on the moral clarity of the fight for world freedom. This policy has already been implemented in Afghanistan when we liberated its people from the deadly grips of Islamic fundamentalism. It continues in Iraq where we have ended decades of despotic governance by a ruthless dictator. This was not done, as alleged by this country's detractors, for oil or glory, but for the mere reason, again stated so clearly by the President: *"The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace is the expansion of freedom in all the world."*

Supporting freedom in the world is, maybe for the first time in our history, deemed to be indispensable to protect the liberties we enjoy in our country. Based on this principle, the United States' commitment to eliminate despotism from the world transcends any temporal or materialistic interests. The noble goal of the liberation of the oppressed and the annihilation of tyrannies is no longer viewed as an avoidable involvement, but as a requisite for our national safety. This public acknowledgment of the value of the liberty of others in preserving our own reveals a courageous recognition from the United States of its crucial role as champion of freedom in the world.

History shows the grim consequences to our nation from ignoring the proliferation of power in the hands of the unjust. In World War I we thought that two oceans were enough to isolate us from the conflicts in Europe, the result was a damaging war for the United States and the world. In World War II we failed to heed to the ominous actions of Hitler till we were dragged into the costliest world war in history. In the Middle East, we naively thought that the mere appeasement of dictators and extremists will be enough to protect our oil supplies and guarantee our security, only to be startled later by the most virulent attack on our land.

America is awakening to its true mission. *"America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one…. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation….. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time."* the president said. The principles that are cherished by all Americans and that inspired the laws governing our nation have

4900 Leesburg Pike (Suite 203), Alexandria, VA 22302 ● Phone: 703-578-4214 ● Fax: 703-578-4615
E-mail: lic@licus.org ● www.licus.org

long been fleeting dreams for most people of the world. This Administration is leading our nation into a new era of international policies based on moral commitments rather than mundane motives. It is indeed a historic turn and the beginning of a new age. Granted the fight will be long and its toll will be high, but disseminating our democratic way of life will defeat the evil of this world and will bring peace and prosperity to all the nations.

The task of freeing the world is surely formidable but not impossible. This pioneering endeavor is costly and hard, but this country is the living proof of the strength of the human will in confronting challenges and overcoming difficulties. The destiny of our nation is to carry the torch of freedom across the world. May God grant this President, his Administration and the American people the resolve to carry on, till a Statue of Liberty adorns every harbor in this world.

Joseph Gebeily, MD
President,
The Lebanese Information Center