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Monday, February 2nd, 2009 at 12:00 am

**Readout on President Obama's Calls to Iraqi President Talabani, Prime Minister Maliki and President Lee of the Republic of Korea**

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 2, 2009

**READOUT ON THE PRESIDENT'S CALLS TO IRAQI PRESIDENT TALABANI, PRIME MINISTER MALIKI AND PRESIDENT LEE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Below is a readout from Press Secretary Robert Gibbs on President Obama's calls to Iraqi President Talabani, Prime Minister Maliki and President Lee of the Republic of Korea:

President Obama spoke today with Iraqi President Talabani and Prime Minister Maliki to congratulate them on the provincial elections held on Saturday. The elections took place with little violence and should mark an additional step toward Iraq assuming greater responsibility for its future. The President offered the best wishes of the American people as Iraq's new provincial leaders begin to assume important new responsibilities on behalf of the Iraqi people. President Obama described the review of U.S. planning on options for executing a responsible military drawdown that he directed on the first day of his administration. He reiterated his commitment to consult with the Iraqi Government as the process moves forward.

President Obama also spoke with President Lee of the Republic of Korea. In a warm and substantive talk, the President conveyed his deep commitment to the United States–Republic of Korea alliance. Both presidents expressed their intention to expand cooperation on global issues. They discussed the current financial crisis and agreed to work together, including at the G–20 Summit in London, to stabilize the global economy, to spur growth, and to get credit markets flowing. The presidents also discussed North Korea and agreed to work closely as allies and through the six–party talks to achieve the verifiable elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons and programs.

You are Here: [Home](#) > The Briefing Room

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- The Blog
- Your Weekly Address
- Slideshows
- Press Briefings
- Official Statements
- Press Releases
- Presidential Actions
- Nominations & Appointments

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- Civil Rights
- Defense
- Disabilities
- Economy
- Education
- Energy & Environment
- Ethics
- Family
- Fiscal
- Foreign Policy
- Health Care
- Homeland Security
- Immigration

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- First Lady Michelle Obama
- Dr. Jill Biden
- The Cabinet
- White House Staff
- Executive Office of the President

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- Presidents
- First Ladies
- Vice President's Residence & Office
- Eisenhower Executive Office Building
- The Oval Office
- Camp David
- Air Force One
- White House Fellows
- White House Internships
- White House 101

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- The Judicial Branch
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- Federal Agencies & Commissions
- Elections & Voting
- State & Local Government
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