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**Statement by
Thomas H. Kean, Chair, and Lee H. Hamilton, Vice Chair
of the 9/11 Commission**

August 20, 2004— As of tomorrow, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9/11 Commission) closes its doors. Twenty-one months ago, President Bush signed legislation to create the Commission. The legislation specifically charged the Commission to “make a full and complete accounting of the circumstances surrounding the attacks, and the extent of the United States' preparedness for, and immediate response to, the attacks” and to make “recommendations for corrective measures that can be taken to prevent acts of terrorism.” Through the Commission’s public hearings, staff statements, and final report, we believe we have fulfilled our mandate.

We have often said that the Commission’s success will be measured by the implementation of our recommendations. While the Commission will cease to exist as a government entity, we and the other eight former Commissioners will continue to work as an independent, bipartisan group to educate the country about our report and monitor the implementation of our recommendations. More information about the 9/11 Public Discourse Project will be forthcoming at a later date.

Finally, we thank the President, the Congress, and the American people for their support throughout the Commission’s work. We are heartened that Americans are talking about the report and debating the recommendations with their families, friends, and coworkers. Our nation’s political leadership is responding with prompt attention. We fully endorse deliberation on these important questions, but not delay. We believe terrorism is the national security challenge of our generation, and now is the time to meet it. Not as Republicans or Democrats, but together, united, as Americans. We look forward to continuing to work together with the public and our political leaders to make our country safer and more secure.

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