

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

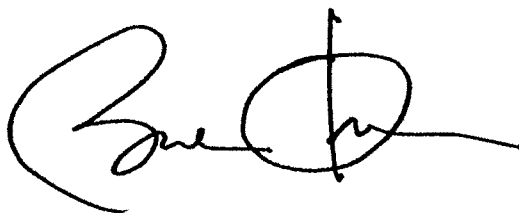
May 2009

I am pleased to join with everyone gathered and the people of Australia in remembering the 67th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea. Today and every day, we remember the courage and valor of American and Australian men and women who fought and died to restore peace and preserve freedom, and we honor their memory.

The Battle of the Coral Sea is of singular importance to both our countries and the world. On May 7 and 8, 1942, in one of World War II's great sea battles, Australian naval cruisers and bombers joined the United States Pacific Fleet to halt Japan's advance in the Pacific. This strategic victory for the Allies forced the Japanese to call off their planned invasion of Port Moresby and deflected the threat to Australia.

This historic moment also marked the beginning of the United States-Australian military alliance, formalized by the ANZUS Treaty in 1951. This treaty also marked another step forward in the remarkable friendship between our peoples that dates from Australia's founding. Today, I am pleased to reaffirm the special place that we hold in our hearts for the people of Australia and the alliance that has sustained us for almost 60 years.

Again, please accept my best wishes on this important occasion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", written in a cursive style. The signature is centered on the page.