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STATEMENT BY VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD
ON THE RETURN OF PRESIDENT NIXON
JUNE 19, 1974, WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 1974

CONTACT:
PAUL MILTICH -
456-2364

Welcome home, and thank you on behalf of the American people, and all the peace-loving peoples of the world, for the mission to the Middle East which you have just completed with such dignity and distinction.

When you left here just ten days ago many sincere people were not sure that the delicate diplomatic agreements negotiated by our great Secretary of State Henry Kissinger would hold together even for the duration of your journey. You have, in fact, cemented these foundation stones of peace with the leaders of Israel and the Arab nations of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Jordan. Your welcome in each of these five very different countries is a tribute not only to you, Sir, but to the great nation which freely chose you as its leader and spokesman in the forum of the world.

I have had the privilege of welcoming you upon your return from important and productive missions to other countries on many previous occasions, going back to the days when you were the Vice President and President Eisenhower entrusted you with key assignments of representing this country abroad. In all of these difficult missions you have brought great credit to our country and advanced the prospects of peace and friendship among all nations and peoples.

Permit me to say that Mrs. Nixon, who has been your faithful partner throughout what must be millions of air miles, and sometimes on her own, has charmed and captivated both the officials and the citizens of every country she has visited and surely is entitled to be saluted in her own right as First Lady of the world.

Mr. President, I wished you Godspeed last week and urged all our countrymen to pray for your safety and success on this historic mission. My prayers and those of our fellow

countrymen have been answered manyfold. I cannot escape the conclusion that the Biblical injunction "Blessed are the peacemakers" has again been confirmed.

I know, as you have repeatedly cautioned, that the road to permanent peace and understanding, whether in the Middle East, or in Asia, or in Europe or between ourselves and the people of the Soviet Union, is a long and difficult road. It will require the best efforts of our generation and perhaps the next -- of your children and mine. The unity and firmness of purpose which the American people have so often demonstrated in war must now be displayed in the pursuit of peace. There is an old Arab saying, I am told, which seems to fit the happy occasion of your return: "May Allah make our end better than our beginning."

Thank you, and once again, let me say we are glad to have you back.

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Mr. President, Mrs. Nixon, etc. , etc., etc.

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R. FORD ~~UPON~~ THE ~~RETURN~~ RETURN OF PRESIDENT NIXON
JUNE 19, 1974
Mr. President, Mrs. Nixon, ~~etc., etc., etc.~~ etc.

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PAUL MURPHY
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