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A Day of Remembrance
Reflections on the Second Anniversary of September 11

**Statement by
Ron Gonzales, Mayor of San Jose**

It's been two years since the tragedy of September 11, and we have only begun to understand how it has changed our nation, the world, and our lives. Thousands of lives were lost suddenly and senselessly, yet we have seen the deep wells of courage and community that are the true strength of America. We continue to draw the meaning from the losses of that terrible day.

Our nation's founding principles of democracy, freedom, and justice continue to be among our greatest contributions that the United States has given to the world. We must continue to defend them against the threats that come from afar and from our midst, and work to secure the promise of freedom and justice for all.

Our diverse country that draws upon the cultures, experiences and perspectives of all our people is unique in history. What we share in common far outweighs our differences, and it makes us stronger and more resilient nation. We must continue our work embrace our differences and demonstrate the tolerance that makes us Americans, regardless of where we come from, in the face of those that would divide us.

Our heroes live among us, every day, and are willing to risk their lives to protect friends and strangers alike. Firefighters and police officers who rush into danger. Soldiers who defend us, and medical people who save us. We must honor those who offer their lives to serve and protect us.

Our country is intricately linked to the people and nations of the world, and our principles of freedom, justice and democracy cannot stop at our shores. We must rededicate ourselves and our nation to these principles that are essential for moving toward peace in the world.

Finally, each day we have is a gift. Life is indeed fragile, and time is always short. We must treasure our friends and families, and give generously to make our communities, our nation, and our world a safer and better place.