



## Message from the Attorney General

This report on the Department of Justice's performance during fiscal year 2001 and plans for fiscal year 2002 serves as an important mechanism of accountability and measure of progress. I am pleased to present it to you.

The attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> have redefined the mission of the Department of Justice. Defending our nation and the citizens of America against terrorist attacks is now our first and overriding priority. To fulfill this mission, we are devoting all the resources necessary to eliminate terrorist networks, to prevent terrorist attacks, and to bring to justice those who kill Americans in the name of murderous ideologies. This Report and Plan reflect that mission and outline future objectives related to it.

We have launched the largest, most comprehensive criminal investigation in history to identify the perpetrators of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and to prevent further terrorist attacks. Four thousand FBI agents are engaged, with their international counterparts, in an unprecedented worldwide effort to detect, disrupt and dismantle terrorist organizations. We have created a national task force to centralize control and information sharing during our investigation. In this fight against terrorism, the American people have been our valued and trusted and indispensable ally. Our partners in state and law enforcement have been our eyes and ears and muscle on the ground.

We have sought and received additional tools from Congress and have begun to utilize many of these valuable tools. Within hours of passage of the USA PATRIOT Act we made use of its provisions to begin enhanced information sharing between law enforcement and the intelligence community. At the direction of the President, a Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force was created to ensure that we do everything in our power to prevent and deter terrorists from entering the country, and to locate and remove those who may have already entered.

On November 8, 2001 I announced a comprehensive review and wartime reorganization of the Department of Justice to meet our counterterrorism mission. This effort recognizes that we cannot do everything we once did because lives now depend on us doing a few things very well.

In addition to our primary mission, the Department of Justice will continue to vigorously enforce federal laws; deter, investigate and prosecute federal crimes, including gun, drug and civil rights violations; incarcerate offenders; partner with state, local and community groups to prevent crime; secure America's borders; provide services to immigrants; and provide leadership and assistance in meeting the needs of crime victims.

Our mission is clear. As the President said, in this mission "we will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail." May God continue to bless America.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ashcroft". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**John Ashcroft**