

Statement on Completion of the Chemical Weapons Convention January 13, 1993

For more than 20 years the United States and many other countries have labored to achieve a ban on chemical weapons. The long-awaited Chemical Weapons Convention is now completed and open for signature.

I have had a deep and abiding personal interest in the success of the effort to ban these terrible weapons. As Vice President, I had the honor on two occasions to address the Conference on Disarmament and to present United States proposals to give impetus to the negotiations. As President, I directed the United States to take new initiatives to advance and conclude the negotiations. The United States is profoundly gratified that these talks have now been successfully concluded.

The countries that participated in the negotiations at the conference on disarmament deserve special congratulations. The Chemical Weapons Convention is uniquely important in the field of arms control agreements. It will improve the security of all nations by eliminating a class of weap-

ons of mass destruction that exists in all quarters of the world and that has been used in recent conflicts. It is a truly stabilizing and nondiscriminatory agreement.

The United States strongly supports the Chemical Weapons Convention and is proud to be an original signatory. We are encouraged that so many other states have also decided to take this step. This clearly demonstrates global international endorsement of the convention and the new norm of international conduct that it establishes. However, we must not cease our efforts until the norm becomes truly universal, with all countries becoming not only signatories but also parties to the convention.

Much work remains to make the convention fully effective. The United States will cooperate closely with other countries to bring the convention into force as soon as possible and to ensure that it is faithfully implemented. Only then will we be able to say that the risk of chemical warfare is no longer a threat to people anywhere in the world.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the National Strategy on the Environment

January 13, 1993

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

During the past 4 years, the world has witnessed major changes in the political profile of nations. The Earth Summit, sponsored by the United Nations in Brazil in June 1992, signaled the next era in world history—one characterized by the recognition that environmental protection, economic development, and public participation in decision-making are interrelated and crucial to our future quality of life.

In these last 4 years, the United States charted an ambitious agenda to remain in the vanguard of environmental protection by harnessing the energy of capitalism in service of the environment. Those who said

that we posed a false choice between a strong economy and a healthy environment disregarded our words and our deeds. We worked to achieve both while sacrificing neither—as must all nations in the coming century.

Economic development and environmental protection go hand in hand. Economic growth supplies the financial and technological resources necessary for environmental enhancement; while its opposite, the struggle for bare survival, places strains on natural protection. We have seen this phenomenon in America as our economy grew in the 1980s and waters and skies became cleaner, just as we have seen it in the degraded