

ties between our countries and give all our people the education and training they need to succeed in this new global economy.

But democracy and prosperity are threatened where there is violence, so our third goal is to look for ways to work in partnership with the nations of Africa to prevent armed conflict. Ethnic and political violence continues to plague parts of Africa. Together we can, and we must, find solutions.

Fourth, the United States wants to play a role in preserving Africa's majestic natural beauty and wildlife and ensuring sustainable development of Africa's natural resources. The nations of the world must continue to cooperate and avoid environmental destruction and to leave a rich heritage to our children.

There are many other areas where we can progress as partners: improving nutrition and health care, eradicating diseases like AIDS and malaria, empowering women, fighting crime and

drugs, expanding civic and cultural ties across the ocean. With the 21st century fast approaching, Africa, the cradle of human civilization, is forging a vibrant future for itself with new leaders, new opportunities, and new hope. The core values that are driving Africa's renaissance—democracy, diversity, free enterprise—those are the values that the United States shares.

My wife, Hillary, my daughter, Chelsea, the entire United States delegation, and I look forward to being with you and sharing our experience with the American people.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 2:30 p.m. on March 5 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

## Statement on the Agreement on Internet Taxes

*March 19, 1998*

In my recent speech on the future of the Internet, I called for a short-term moratorium on new and discriminatory taxes that would slow down the growth of the Internet and a search for long-term solutions to the tax issues raised by electronic commerce. We cannot allow 30,000 State and local tax jurisdictions to stifle the Internet, but neither can we allow the erosion of the revenue that State and local governments need to fight crime and invest in education.

I believe that the agreement reached by groups representing State and local elected offi-

cials is an important and constructive step toward a long-term solution. I particularly want to thank Governors Leavitt and Romer for their bipartisan leadership on this important issue. I look forward to working with all parties with a stake in this issue to enact legislation this year.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.

## Statement on Proposed Legislation To Raise the Minimum Wage

*March 19, 1998*

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage to reward work and help millions of Americans raise their families with dignity. With our expanded earned-income tax credit and the higher minimum wage, we said to hard-pressed working

families: If you work full-time, you should not have to raise your children in poverty. Without another minimum wage increase, too many of these families will fall through the cracks and back below the poverty line. That is wrong.

That is why I am pleased that Senator Daschle, Senator Kennedy, Representative Gephardt, and Representative Bonior are introducing legislation that includes another sound and prudent minimum wage increase. With our economy the healthiest in a generation and job growth strong, we can afford to increase the

minimum wage by a dollar by the turn of the century. I strongly support raising the minimum wage. This legislation will help ensure that we pay people a decent wage and that parents who work hard and play by the rules can lift their children and themselves out of poverty. It's right for America and right for America's workers.

## Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation on Community Service

*March 19, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am pleased to transmit for your immediate consideration and enactment the "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998." This legislative proposal extends and amends national service law, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. It builds upon the long, bipartisan tradition of service in our country, which was renewed in 1993 when I signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating the Corporation for National Service.

Service to one's community is an integral part of what it means to be an American. The Presidents' Summit for America's Future held in Philadelphia last April reinforced the role of programs supported by the Corporation for National Service as key vehicles to provide young people with the resources to maximize their potential and give back to their communities. Citizen service is also at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and to help those in need.

My Administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, the national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve their country. By tying opportunity to responsibility, we have given them the chance to serve and, in return, earn money for post-secondary education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proven that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs. For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped second

graders jump three grade levels in reading. In Boys and Girls Clubs, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to recruit more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild lives and restore hope. AmeriCorps members are helping to mobilize thousands of college students from more than 800 college campuses in our America Reads program. In all of these efforts, AmeriCorps brings together people of every background to work toward common goals.

Independent evaluators have reviewed AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps programs, and Learn and Service America programs and have concluded that national service yields a positive return on investment. The proposed legislation that I am transmitting builds on our experiences with national service to date and improves national service programs in four ways: (1) by codifying agreements with the Congress and others to reduce costs and streamline national service; (2) strengthening partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations; (3) increasing States' flexibility to administer national service programs; and (4) expanding opportunities for Americans to serve.

Since the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993, and particularly since 1995, my Administration has worked with constructive critics of national service to address their concerns and improve the overall program. This proposed legislation continues that process by reducing the Corporation's average budgeted cost per AmeriCorps member, repealing authority for redundant or