

violence continues in others, like Burundi, Somalia, and Sudan. Buried landmines prevent children from walking in safety in too many African countries. Millions of refugees still remain driven from their homes. In the debris of war, poverty and disease thrive.

The international community needs new tools to keep the peace in volatile areas and cope with humanitarian crises. The African Crisis Response Initiative program, which President Diouf and I have seen in action here today, provides peacekeeping training and nonlethal equipment to African soldiers, with the goal of helping African nations to prepare their military units, led by African commanders, to respond quickly and effectively to humanitarian and peacekeeping challenges in Africa and around the world.

Senegal was one of the first nations to support the African Crisis Response Initiative, and along with Uganda, the first to participate in its training exercises. Mali and Malawi participated soon after. We are about to begin an exercise with Ghanaian troops, along with Belgian soldiers. Later this year, we will conduct exercises with Ethiopia, and we look forward to other countries participating soon.

Our purpose is not to dominate security matters in Africa or to abandon America's role in Africa's security but, instead, to build on existing efforts, including those of African nations, the Organization for African Unity, the United Nations, France, Britain, and others, to strengthen the capacity for preserving peace here. With our African partners we will also establish a

center for security studies in Africa, modeled on the Marshall Center in Germany, to provide programs for civilian and military leaders on defense policy planning and the role of militaries in democratic societies.

America will continue to be involved on this continent as long as African nations desire our assistance and our partnership in building a safer future.

Mr. President, I want to thank you and your military leaders for being such partners. And I would like to thank the members of the American military, and one in particular, General Jamerson, for his efforts, relentless over the past couple of years, to build closer ties between African militaries and our own.

To meet the threats to peace and freedom we will face in the 21st century, we must strengthen our resolve in the face of hatred and violence. We must tell the aggressors and those who tear societies apart, "You will not prevail." We must prove that the peacemakers are getting stronger. And above all, we must demonstrate that the peacemakers are working together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. at Thies Military Base. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Col. Abdoulaye Diallo, Senegalese commander, African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI); Maj. Adrian E. Erckenbrack, USA, Commander, Operational Detachment Bravo; and Gen. James L. Jamerson, USAF, Deputy Commander in Chief, European Command.

Statement on House Action Against Legislation To Establish a Uniform Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

April 1, 1998

It is imperative that we set a uniform standard of .08 blood-alcohol content to protect our young people from harm, make our streets safer, and help us crack down on drunk driving nationwide. Our country will not tolerate irresponsible acts that endanger our children and our Nation.

I am disappointed that the House Rules Committee has decided to keep the critical .08 legislation from coming to the floor under the BESTEA transportation bill. By establishing a

strong but sensible limit on blood-alcohol content, we could save as many as 600 lives a year. Saving lives and promoting responsibility should not be partisan issues.

Last month, under the leadership of Senator Lautenberg and Senator DeWine, the Senate overwhelmingly supported the .08 standard for drinking and driving. The House leadership, however, once again is hiding behind procedural

maneuvers by blocking this effort to protect children and help put an end to drunk driving. The American people deserve better than this.

Last night's setback was by no means final. Building on our victory in the Senate we will work to overcome this roadblock by the House leadership. We will continue the fight against drunk driving on every front. Today, as part

of our comprehensive effort, we are announcing grants made possible by the leadership of Senator Byrd that will help combat underage drinking. I stand ready to aid Representative Lowey and Representative Canady as they continue their efforts to pass a sensible, uniform DUI standard. We will keep fighting to put the brakes on drunk driving.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption

April 1, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption ("the Convention"), adopted and opened for signature at the Specialized Conference of the Organization of American States (OAS) at Caracas, Venezuela, on March 29, 1996. The Convention was signed by the United States on June 27, 1996, at the twenty-seventh regular session of the OAS General Assembly meeting in Panama City, Panama. In addition, for the information of the Senate, I transmit the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

The Convention was the first multilateral Convention of its kind in the world to be adopted. The provisions of the Convention are explained in the accompanying report of the Department of State. The report also sets forth proposed understandings that would be deposited by the United States with its instrument of ratification. The Convention will not require implementing legislation for the United States.

The Convention should be an effective tool to assist in the hemispheric effort to combat corruption, and could also enhance the law enforcement efforts of the States Parties in other areas, given the links that often exist between corruption and organized criminal activity such

as drug trafficking. The Convention provides for a broad range of cooperation, including extradition, mutual legal assistance, and measures regarding property, in relation to the acts of corruption described in the Convention.

The Convention also imposes on the States Parties an obligation to criminalize acts of corruption if they have not already done so. Especially noteworthy is the obligation to criminalize the bribery of foreign government officials. This provision was included in the Convention at the behest of the United States negotiating delegation. In recent years, the United States Government has sought in a number of multilateral fora to persuade other governments to adopt legislation akin to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. This Convention represents a significant breakthrough on that front and should lend impetus to similar measures in other multilateral groups.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the understandings described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 1, 1998.