

than anything else—the proper, wise deployment of police resources in a community fashion to prevent crime and to catch criminals.

Since the crime bill passed, we've come a long way toward putting our goal of 100,000 police on the street. You heard the mayor say how many there were in New York City. We have to finish the job, however. We're about two-thirds of the way there, since 1994. We've funded about 67,000 police officers.

Today I'm pleased to announce that we are going to help New York City hire and deploy 1,600 more community police officers. With the new police officers, we now helped to fund more than 70,000 of the 100,000 community police across America. And I want you to know we intend to keep going until we've got all 100,000 on the beat. We want to get it done ahead of schedule. In the big cities like New York where the problems of crime and drugs and guns once seemed absolutely insurmountable, real progress has been made.

Now, there's still a lot to do. The mayor talked about the drug problem. Our budget coming up has more funds for drug education, drug prevention, and drug treatment. I issued an Executive order just a couple of days ago relating to drug treatment in the State penitentiaries of the country.

The New York Times reported today that some cities, particularly smaller cities, are still struggling, cities that never felt the kind of problems you came to take for granted or at least—not for granted—at least a part of your daily life before, and perhaps aren't as well equipped as you are to handle them. We have more to do to clean up our cities, to get more guns

and gangs and drugs off the streets, and more police officers on the streets. But if we keep going we'll get the job done.

I'd also like to say, we all know that we have an unresolved problem with crime by young people, juveniles. While that rate seems to be dropping now, it has not gone down nearly as much as the overall crime rate. And I'm convinced we have to do more to deal with these young people in the hours where most of this crime is committed, which is after school but before their folks get home. We're committed to working hard with our cities to help to deal with that.

So today is a good day. Hundreds of more police officers from New York City—it means a lower crime rate for a city that has proved that the police can do the job, given the kind of community support we need and the kind of farsighted policies that I think we have to pursue together as Americans.

So thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Commissioner. Thanks to the Members of Congress. And my thanks to the people in the police department.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the press room in Port Authority Building #14 at John F. Kennedy International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir of New York City, and Thomas J. Scotto, president, National Association of Police Organizations. He also referred to his memorandum of January 12 on ending drug use and drug availability for offenders.

## Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the Baltic Nations-United States Charter of Partnership January 16, 1998

*The President.* President Meri; President Brazauskas; President Ulmanis; members of the Estonian, Lithuanian, and Latvian delegations; Secretary Albright; Mr. Berger; Members of Congress; Senator Dole; Mr. Brzezinski; and all friends of the Baltic nations who are here.

The Vice President and I and our administration were honored to welcome President Meri,

President Brazauskas, and President Ulmanis to Washington to reaffirm our common vision of a Europe whole and free, where Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia play their full and rightful roles, and to sign a charter of partnership to build that Europe together.

To the three Presidents, let me say thank you. Thank you for the key role you have played

in making this moment possible, holding to the difficult path of political and economic reform, leading Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania back to the community of free nations where they belong. This charter of partnership underscores how far your nations have come. Almost exactly 7 years ago today, Baltic citizens were facing down tanks in the struggle to reclaim their independence. Today, your democracies have taken root. You stand among Europe's fastest growing economies. Your nations are a source of stability within your region and beyond, through the Partnership For Peace, the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion, and your contributions in Bosnia.

America has been proud to support this progress through our SEED assistance program, more than 500 Peace Corps volunteers, and in many other ways. We share a stake in your success. And with this charter, we set out a framework to achieve our common goals. It affirms our commitment to promoting harmony and human dignity within our societies; it stresses our interest in close cooperation among the Baltic States and with all their neighbors; it launches new working groups on economic development to spur greater trade, investment, and growth, complementing the efforts of our European friends; and it furthers America's commitment to help Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia to deepen their integration and prepare for membership in the European Union and NATO.

Of course, there can be no guarantees of admission to the alliance. Only NATO's leaders, operating by consensus, can offer membership to an aspiring state. But America's security is tied to Europe, and Europe will never be fully secure if Baltic security is in doubt. NATO's door is and will remain open to every partner nation, and America is determined to create the conditions under which Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia can one day walk through that door.

The hopes that fuel the goals of this charter must be matched by our will to achieve them. That's why we're forming a new partnership commission which Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott will chair. I'm pleased to report that the charter is making a difference already. Yesterday our nations signed treaties to eliminate double taxation, which will encourage American business to play an even greater role in Baltic prosperity. We're also expanding our common efforts to combat organized crime with

better information-sharing and more joint operations.

And this year the United States, in a unique public/private partnership with the Soros Open Society Institute, will be creating a Baltic-American partnership fund to promote the development of civic organizations. Nothing is more crucial to democracy's success than a vibrant network of local groups committed to their communities and their nation. I want to thank George Soros for his visionary generosity.

I also want to say a special thanks to the Baltic-American communities. For 50 years, Lithuanian-, Latvian-, and Estonian-Americans kept alive the dream of Baltic freedom. Now, on the verge of a new century, they are working here at home and with their Baltic brothers and sisters to make sure the hard-won blessings of liberty will never be lost again.

President Meri, President Brazauskas, President Ulmanis, we recall the August day in 1989 when hundreds of thousands of people linked hands from Tallinn to Riga to Vilnius, forming a human chain as strong as the values for which it stood. Today, that Baltic chain extends across the Atlantic Ocean. America's hands and hearts and hopes are joined as one with yours. Working together, we can build a new Europe of democracy, prosperity, and peace, where security is the province of every nation and the future belongs to the free.

Thank you very much.

*President Guntis Ulmanis of Latvia.* Dear President, ladies and gentlemen, today is a happy day as we are signing the U.S.A.-Baltic charter. This charter will serve as a key for the next century. It makes us allies. Our signatures write the strategic philosophy for the next century. They mark strong Atlanticism and also the formation of a new Europe. The Baltic region is a success story for all who shape it by their everyday work.

I call on President Clinton and his administration to get actively involved in the formation of its future. The symbolic meaning of the charter has been expressed in its first words, which speak about our common vision of the future. It has been created by people of our countries in continuous work by mutual enrichment. I am proud of my people and its strengths. I am proud of my friends who I am happy to welcome here.

Thank you.

*President Algirdas Brazauskas of Lithuania.* Dear Presidents, ladies and gentlemen, today we are signing the particularly important document with the United States of America, with which we not only share common values but are also linked by a number of American Lithuanians who have found home in the United States. The charter of partnership establishes the institutional framework that promotes the furtherance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, reciprocal support to the Euro-Atlantic integration, and common efforts designed for the consolidation of security, prosperity, and stability within the region and Euro-Atlantic area as the whole.

The U.S.-Baltic charter confirms repeatedly that Lithuania is a serious candidate for accession to NATO, as well as that the United States support the Baltic States' aspirations and their efforts to become members of the alliance.

Lithuania values the charter first and foremost as the commitment to its further role as the promoter of stability within our region and Europe as a whole, its commitment to progress, economic reforms, and further enhancement of defense system effectiveness and interoperability with the North Atlantic alliance. We appreciate and are supportive of President Clinton's and the U.S. role of leadership in opening up to Central European democracies the doors to history's most successful alliance. It is our hope that this openness to new members will enhance the security and stability for all the present and aspiring members, as well as other European nations.

Thank you.

*President Lennart Meri of Estonia.* Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, today is an historic day in the history of our four nations. With the signing of the charter of partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, we enter a new phase of even closer United States-Baltic relations.

Seventy-five years ago last summer, the United States and Estonia—[inaudible]—diplomatic relations, thus launching a special relationship based in mutual respect and trust. There is an old saying that one recognizes a true friend in times of need. With its bipartisan support for nonrecognition policy, America was a true friend of the Baltics in a time of need, acting

as a beacon of hope throughout the long, dark, and cold years of the Soviet occupation.

You, Mr. President, were a true friend when, 4 years ago, you personally contributed to making sure that occupation would end and the foreign troops were withdrawn. This principled behavior is one quality of United States foreign policy that we greatly admire. The fact that morals play a major role in Americans' foreign policy is what defines the United States as the world's remaining superpower.

Estonia sees the United States-Baltic charter as the latest expression of that principled approach. The charter recognizes the Baltic States' role in the American strategy to guarantee security and stability on the European Continent, and spells out that the United States has a real, profound, and enduring interest in the security and sovereignty of the Baltic States.

An important element in our security strategy is eventual full membership in NATO. We believe that NATO continues to be the sole guarantor of security and stability in Europe. Estonia applauds President Clinton for his leadership in starting the process of NATO enlargement which has already redefined the terms of security policy in Europe.

Estonia also understands that NATO enlargement through the Baltics will be the next big project of the alliance. We believe that the question of Baltic membership in NATO will become the real test of post-Madrid security thinking—that is, that countries shall be able to choose their security arrangements regardless of geography. We are confident that, with American leadership, this test will be met with success.

Thank you.

*The President.* I thank you all. We are now going to sign our charter. Before we do, I just want to say again how much I appreciate all of our guests coming here, all from the three nations, their American counterparts. And thank you, Senator Durbin, Congresswoman Pelosi, Congressman Shimkus, Congressman Kucinich. Thank you, Senator Dole and Mr. Brzezinski.

And I'd also like to point out—I didn't earlier—we have a very large, unusually large, representation from the diplomatic corps here, which is a tribute to the importance of this moment, that the rest of the world community attaches to it. And I thank all the ambassadors who are here. Thank you all very much for your presence.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole; former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski;

and philanthropist George Soros, chairman, Soros Fund Management, LCC. He also referred to the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Program.

## **A Charter of Partnership Among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania** *January 16, 1998*

### *Preamble*

The United States of America, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, hereafter referred to as Partners.

Sharing a common vision of a peaceful and increasingly integrated Europe, free of divisions, dedicated to democracy, the rule of law, free markets, and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people;

Recognizing the historic opportunity to build a new Europe, in which each state is secure in its internationally-recognized borders and respects the independence and territorial integrity of all members of the transatlantic community;

Determined to strengthen their bilateral relations as a contribution to building this new Europe, and to enhance the security of all states through the adaptation and enlargement of European and transatlantic institutions;

Committed to the full development of human potential within just and inclusive societies attentive to the promotion of harmonious and equitable relations among individuals belonging to diverse ethnic and religious groups;

Avowing a common interest in developing cooperative, mutually respectful relations with all other states in the region;

Recalling the friendly relations that have been continuously maintained between the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania since 1922;

Further recalling that the United States of America never recognized the forcible incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the USSR in 1940 but rather regards their statehood as uninterrupted since the establishment of their independence, a policy which the United States has restated continuously for five decades;

Celebrating the rich contributions that immigrants from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have made to the multi-ethnic culture of the United States of America, as well as the European heritage enjoyed by the United States as a beneficiary of the contributions of intellectuals, artists, and Hanseatic traders from the Baltic states to the development of Europe; praising the contributions of U.S. citizens to the liberation and rebuilding of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Affirm as a political commitment declared at the highest level, the following principles and procedures to guide their individual and joint efforts to achieve the goals of this Charter.

### *Principles of Partnership*

The United States of America has a real, profound and enduring interest in the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and security of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The United States of America warmly welcomes the success of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in regaining their freedom and resuming their rightful places in the community of nations.

The United States of America respects the sacrifices and hardships undertaken by the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to re-establish their independence. It encourages efforts by these states to continue to expand their political, economic, security, and social ties with other nations as full members of the transatlantic community.

The Partners affirm their commitment to the rule of law as a foundation for a transatlantic community of free and democratic nations, and to the responsibility of all just societies to protect and respect the human rights and civil liberties of all individuals residing within their territories.