

our energy companies as they work with you. Our diplomats and energy experts will help to facilitate solutions that meet the needs of all the Caspian states in Turkey. Secretary Richardson's presence here today is evidence of our continuing commitment.

We understand that today represents just the beginning of the intensive commercial phase of this work. In the months ahead, our Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Trade and Development Agency all will work with you on a commercial financing package.

Nearly 700 years ago, this part of the world was so rich in oil that a visitor to Baku described it as blazing like a fire all night. It has been many years since the people of this region had

the freedom and security to realize their vast potential. Today, they have the freedom, they have the security, and today their leaders have shown the vision that will enable this ancient crossroads once again to light the world and brighten all our futures.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:35 p.m. in the Blue Room at Ciragan Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey; Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway; President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan; President Saparmurat Miyazov of Turkmenistan; President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan; and President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

November 18, 1999

The parties in Northern Ireland, working with George Mitchell, have taken a powerful step toward lasting peace. I warmly welcome Senator Mitchell's final report and support his conclusions fully. We should all take heart from the fact that the parties have strongly reaffirmed their commitment to the Good Friday accord. In a spirit of unprecedented mutual understanding, they have addressed issues of deep concern to one another. Together, they have

shaped the outlines of the way ahead, as described by Senator Mitchell today. I urge the parties to maintain this level of dialog with each other and with the public at large in the days ahead and to proceed with rapid implementation of the agreement. Once again, I want to express my deepest appreciation to Senator Mitchell for his dedication to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

Statement on Assistance for Southeast Europe

November 18, 1999

I am pleased that yesterday in Brussels the international community pledged over \$1 billion in new assistance to consolidate peace and promote economic recovery in Kosovo. I am particularly pleased that our European partners committed the lion's share of this amount, with the European Commission and EU members together pledging over three-quarters of a billion dollars and additional pledges from other European states.

These contributions will not only provide a significant boost to economic revitalization and

reconstruction but also help to fund public administration, establish a civil emergency service corps, strengthen public security and the rule of law, promote market reforms, and encourage private investment. We did our part by announcing plans to provide \$157 million for Kosovo, pending final action on the budget before Congress.

Today at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, Europe demonstrated its strong leadership in support of recovery and stabilization throughout

southeast Europe. I welcome European Commission President Prodi's intention to have the EC provide nearly 12 billion euros (approximately \$12.5 billion) of assistance to the region during 2000–2006. Such a substantial package will create tremendous opportunities for those

countries and affirm in the strongest terms European support for their transformation. We are continuing our assistance programs to encourage political and economic reform and advance the region's integration with the rest of Europe.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Aeronautics and Space Activities

November 18, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit this report on the Nation's achievements in aeronautics and space during Fiscal Year (FY) 1998, as required under section 206 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2476). Aeronautics and space activities involved 14 contributing departments and agencies of the Federal Government, and the results of their ongoing research and development affect the Nation in many ways.

A wide variety of aeronautics and space developments took place during FY 1998. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) successfully completed five Space Shuttle flights. There were 29 successful Expendable Launch Vehicle (ELV) launches in FY 1998. Of those, 3 were NASA-managed missions, 2 were NASA-funded/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-licensed missions, 8 were Department of Defense (DOD)-managed missions, and 16 were FAA-licensed commercial launches. Scientists also made some dramatic new discoveries

in various space-related fields such as space science, Earth science, and remote sensing, and life and microgravity science. In aeronautics, activities included work on high-speed research, advanced subsonic technology, and technologies designed to improve the safety and efficiency of our commercial airlines and air traffic control system.

Close international cooperation with Russia occurred on the Shuttle-*Mir* docking missions and on the ISS program. The United States also entered into new forms of cooperation with its partners in Europe, South America, and Asia.

Thus, FY 1998 was a very successful one for U.S. aeronautics and space programs. Efforts in these areas have contributed significantly to the Nation's scientific and technical knowledge, international cooperation, a healthier environment, and a more competitive economy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 18, 1999.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland and an Exchange With Reporters in Istanbul

November 19, 1999

Northern Ireland Peace Process

President Clinton. Good morning. Let me say to all of you that I'm delighted to have this chance to meet with the *Taoiseach* and talk about the Irish peace process. I want to congratulate Prime Minister Ahern, Prime Minister Blair, and clearly, Senator Mitchell and the par-

ties for the progress that has been made in the last few days. It's obvious that the parties have really worked hard to reaffirm their common commitment to the Good Friday accord, to hear each other's concerns, and then to develop a step-by-step plan to actually consummate this peace agreement. So I'm very hopeful, and I want to thank you for what you've done.