

Feb. 10 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Accountability Review Board, the Secretary of State appointed a panel, chaired by Lewis Kaden, to review our overseas operations. The Overseas Presence Advisory Panel included a distinguished array of individuals with diplomatic, military, and governmental experience, as well as important members of the business community. The Panel's report last November recommended a wide range of improvements in rightsizing, managing, improving, and protecting our staff who work abroad. The report also recommended changes to the way our representatives overseas work as a team in support of American interests and in the management and financing of U.S. Government overseas facilities.

The Panel has made an important contribution to our Nation's security and the conduct of international affairs. My budget proposals reflect and fully support their recommendation that a greater commitment is needed in this

critical area. I also agree with their recommendation for review and improvement in the way we manage our overseas presence.

I have asked the Secretary of State to lead a Cabinet committee to implement the Panel's recommendations regarding rightsizing. This process will look at the full range of agency staff, who serve in U.S. missions abroad, and make recommendations about the appropriate levels and skills with which we should staff our Embassies in the new century. It will also review and make recommendations regarding the management, financing, and computerization of overseas facilities.

I ask the Congress to join me in working to protect America's presence throughout the world and to ensure that we maintain the best and most effective presence overseas to serve America's interests.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Russia-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation *February 10, 2000*

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 Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Moscow on June 17, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, a related exchange of notes and the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including terrorism, money laundering, organized crime and drug-trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance

available under the Treaty includes obtaining the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records and other items; serving documents; locating or identifying persons and items; executing requests for searches and seizures; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; locating and immobilizing assets for purposes of forfeiture, restitution, or collection of fines; and any other form of legal assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested Party.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 10, 2000.