

days after acceptance by two-thirds of the contracting parties.

The revisions are designed to bring the IPPC into line with modern practices and concepts, and to establish new mechanisms to promote the development and adoption of international phytosanitary standards.

It is my hope that the Senate will give prompt and favorable consideration to this Convention,

and give its advice and consent to acceptance by the United States, subject to the two proposed understandings set forth in the accompanying report, at the earliest possible date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 23, 2000.

Remarks at the Mahavir Trust Hospital in Hyderabad, India *March 24, 2000*

Thank you very much. Good morning, Chief Minister Naidu. Thank you for welcoming me today to your State and to this magnificent city. Dr. Aruna, thank you for your remarks and for your work. Dr. Kolluri, to Ms. Rachel Chatterjee, the Minister of Health and the other ministers of the Government that are here; to the staff of the Mahavir Trust Hospital, I thank you all for your dedication and for making me and our American delegation so welcome.

I am honored to be joined today by my daughter, by the American Ambassador to India, Mr. Celeste, and his wife, Jacqueline Lundquist; by the Secretary of Commerce, Bill Daley, and the Administrator of our Agency for International Development, Brady Anderson; and by six distinguished Members of our Congress: Congressman Gary Ackerman and Representative Nita Lowey from New York; Congressman Jim McDermott from Washington; Congressman Ed Royce from California; Congressman Sheila Jackson Lee from Texas; and Representative Jan Schakowsky from Illinois. We are delighted to be here, and we are very interested in what you are doing, and impressed. And we thank you.

We come today to celebrate a success story and to join with you in meeting a new challenge. As Dr. Aruna said, the success story is the virtual complete eradication of polio from the face of the Earth. In 1987, India reported 27,000 cases of this crippling disease. Today, only 1,000 Indians are afflicted, and as you have just heard, there are no reported new cases this year.

India has collaborated in this effort with Rotary International, with the Gates Foundation, with UNICEF, the World Health Organization,

and with the U.S. Agency for International Development, or AID.

I would like to say just a special word of appreciation to our Agency for International Development. It has meant a great deal to America's partnership on a very human level with people all across the world and especially here in India. It has guided our efforts to fight diseases that threaten children, to launch the Green Revolution that helped India achieve self-sufficiency in agriculture, and even more, to provide education, so that parents in India and throughout the world can determine the size of their families and keep their children in school, and to support great Indian universities like IIT.

Now, we believe that USAID will be just as critical and just as active as India and the United States embark on a dynamic new partnership, as we face new challenges like developing the sources of clean energy, bringing the Internet to rural India so all its children can reach out to the world.

So I'd like to say a special word of thanks today to our AID Administrator, Brady Anderson, and B.A. Rudolph and the other members of the AID team who are here. They are devoted to the cause of India, and I thank them for their work.

I would also like to acknowledge, though, that on this polio eradication effort, the vast majority of the funding division and the work has come from India. And the whole world admires greatly what you have achieved.

Now, for the challenge. Today is World Tuberculosis Day. It marks the day the bacteria which causes TB was discovered 118 years ago.

And yet, even though this is 118-year-old knowledge, in the year 2000, TB kills more people around the world than ever before, including one almost every minute here in India.

Malaria is also on the rise here and in South-east Asia and in Africa. And while the AIDS infection rate here is still relatively low, India already has more people infected than any other nation in the world. These are human tragedies, economic calamities, and far more than crises for you, they are crises for the world.

The spread of disease is the one global problem for which, by definition, no nation is immune. So we must do for AIDS, for malaria, for TB what you have done for polio. We must strengthen prevention, speed research, develop vaccines, and ultimately eliminate these modern plagues from the face of the Earth. It can be done—you have proved it with polio—if governments, foundations, and the private sector work together.

With AIDS in particular, it also takes leadership. I want to commend Prime Minister Vajpayee for his efforts to focus India's attention on the urgency of this challenge. In every country and in any culture, it is difficult to talk about the issues involved with AIDS. I know a lot about this because it's been a problem for a long time in America, and now it's a big problem for you. But I would submit to you it is much easier to talk about AIDS than to watch another child die. And we have to face up to our responsibilities for preventing this disease, especially because there is not yet a cure.

I am gratified that India is not waiting to act, and I am proud that the United States is supporting your efforts here. I am happy to announce that we will contribute another \$4 million this year to programs to prevent AIDS and care for victims here in India, and another \$1 million for TB research.

I also want to thank—I want to thank the Gates Foundation and, in particular, Patty Stonesifer, because they are also announcing a number of new contributions today. No private foundation in America and, as far as I know, anywhere in the world has made remotely the

commitment that the Gates Foundation has in the world struggle against infectious disease, and I thank them for that.

Earlier this year, I asked Congress to support a \$1 billion initiative to encourage the private sector to speed the development of vaccines for diseases that particularly affect the developing world—malaria, TB, and AIDS—and then to take steps to make those vaccines affordable to the poorest people in the world who need them. I am going to work hard to obtain support for that initiative in Congress. And again, I thank the Members of our Congress who are here from both parties for their interest and commitment to India and to the public health.

The fight against infectious disease should be a growing part of our partnership with you. Indians already are trailblazers in vaccine research. India pioneered treatments for TB being used today in America. Many of the problems we have talked about are present here in India, but the solutions can be found here as well, in the dedication of men and women like those who work in this clinic and in the genius of your scientists and in the elected officials and their commitment, from Delhi to Hyderabad to countless towns and villages across this country.

Many years ago, India and the United States helped to launch the Green Revolution, which freed millions of people from the misery of hunger. If we can join forces on health, determined again to place science in the service of humanity, we can defeat these diseases; we can give our children the healthy and hopeful lives they deserve in this new century.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to N. Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister, and Dr. S. Aruna, Minister of Health, Andhra Pradesh; Dr. Murthy Kolluri, who made a presentation on tuberculosis and polio treatment; Rachel Chatterjee, Commissioner of Hyderabad; U.S. Ambassador to India Richard F. Celeste; Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India; and Patty Stonesifer, cochair and president, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.