

Statement on Efforts To Improve Relations With North Korea *December 28, 2000*

For several years, we have been working with our east Asian allies to improve relations with North Korea in a way that strengthens peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. We have made substantial progress, including the 1994 Agreed Framework, which froze North Korea's production of plutonium for nuclear weapons under ongoing international inspections, and the 1999 moratorium on long-range missile tests. I believe new opportunities are opening for progress toward greater stability and peace on the Korean Peninsula. However, I have determined that there is not enough time while I am President to prepare the way for an agreement with North Korea that advances our national interest and provides the basis for a trip by me to Pyongyang. Let me emphasize that I believe this process of engagement with North Korea, in coordination with South Korea and Japan, holds great promise and that the United States should continue to build on the progress we have made.

Our policy toward North Korea has been based on a strong framework developed at my request by former Secretary of Defense William Perry and carried out by Secretary of State

Madeleine Albright and Special Adviser Wendy Sherman. We have coordinated each step forward with our allies the Republic of Korea and Japan. The engagement policy of President Kim Dae-jung and his personal leadership have spurred this process and earned the world's admiration. Taken together, our efforts have reduced tensions on the Korean Peninsula, improved prospects for enduring peace and stability in the region, and opened an opportunity to substantially reduce, if not eliminate, the threat posed by North Korean missile development and exports.

This past October, when DPRK Chairman Kim Chong-il invited me to visit his country, and later when Secretary Albright traveled to Pyongyang, Chairman Kim put forward a serious proposal concerning his missile program. Since then, we have discussed with North Korea proposals to eliminate its missile export program as well as to halt further missile development. While there is insufficient time for me to complete the work at hand, there is sufficient promise to continue this effort. The United States has a clear national interest in seeing it through.

Statement on Signing the National Moment of Remembrance Act *December 28, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign S. 3181, the "National Moment of Remembrance Act," which designates 3:00 p.m. local time on Memorial Day each year as the National Moment of Remembrance, in honor of the men and women of the United States who died in the pursuit of freedom and peace. The Act also establishes a White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance, to coordinate and encourage commemorative events on Memorial Day each year, and a Remembrance Alliance, to assist the Commission in promoting the observance of the Memorial Day holiday and organizing an annual White House Conference on the National Moment of Remembrance.

Each Memorial Day, the Nation honors those Americans who died while defending our Nation and its values. While these heroes should be honored every day for their profound contribution to securing our Nation's freedom, they and their families should be especially honored on Memorial Day. The observance of a National Moment of Remembrance is a simple and unifying way to commemorate our history and honor the struggle to protect our freedoms.

This Act recognizes in law a commemoration begun on Memorial Day in May 1997, when "Taps" was played at 3:00 p.m. on many radio and television stations across the Nation as Americans paused to remember the men and women who have lost their lives in service to

our country. This past May, both a Congressional Resolution and a Presidential Proclamation called for the observance of a National Moment of Remembrance. It is my hope that the establishment of the National Moment of Remembrance in law, along with the creation of the White House Commission, will promote greater understanding of the meaning of the Memorial Day holiday for all Americans.

In signing this Act, I note that the Appointments Clause of the Constitution requires that all Federal officers exercising executive authority be appointed in conformity with that Clause. Because the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution—who would be a member of the Commission—is not so appointed, he may not exercise significant governmental authority on the

Commission but may directly participate in the ceremonial or advisory functions of the Commission. Moreover, because the members of the Remembrance Alliance are not appointed in conformity with the Appointments Clause, they must remain under the supervision of the Commission, and I interpret the Act to establish such a relationship between the two bodies.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 28, 2000.

NOTE: S. 3181, approved December 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–579. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Japanese Whaling Practices *December 29, 2000*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 13, 2000, the Secretary of Commerce certified that Japan had authorized its nationals to conduct research whaling activities that diminish the effectiveness of the International Whaling Convention (IWC) conservation program. This message constitutes my report to the Congress pursuant to section 8 of the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967, 22 U.S.C. 1978 (the Pelly Amendment).

Secretary Mineta's certification was the third against Japan for scientific research whaling. The first was in 1988, when Japan initiated its Antarctic program that now entails an annual take of 440 minke whales. The second was in 1995, after Japan extended its program to the North Pacific, where it has been taking 100 minke whales per year. This year, despite a specific resolution passed by the majority of IWC parties calling on Japan to refrain from conducting lethal research in the North Pacific, Japan expanded its program in the North Pacific to permit the take of 10 sperm whales and 50 Bryde's whales. The total harvest in this summer's hunt was 40 minke whales, 5 sperm whales, and 43 Bryde's whales. I remain very concerned about Japan's decision to expand its research whaling to two additional species.

I also remain concerned about Japan's practice of taking whales in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary north of Antarctica. This is an internationally recognized sanctuary that was approved by the IWC. I see no justification for Japan's practice and will continue to urge Japan to reconsider its policy, which I believe undermines the effectiveness of whale sanctuaries everywhere. I note in addition that Japan's practice is clearly out of step with the growing international consensus in support of whale sanctuaries, and in sharp contrast to the strong leadership that Mexico and Brazil have both shown in the last 3 months in designating areas off their coasts as whale sanctuaries.

Along with many other members of the IWC, the United States believes the Japanese research whaling program has dubious scientific validity. Information relevant to management of whale stocks can be collected by nonlethal techniques. Products of the research harvest are sold in Japanese markets, which raises questions about the true motivation for the program. In addition, Japan has conducted the same set of scientific research experiments on significant numbers of minke whales for more than 10 years.

I want to underscore that concerns about Japan's lethal scientific whaling program are not simply a bilateral matter. A substantial majority