

in Ethiopia, where food shortages are affecting six million people and may eventually expose 14 million people to starvation. The United States will continue to provide food aid and other humanitarian assistance to alleviate the effects of the crisis and calls upon other donor nations to provide substantial emergency assistance. The leaders also agreed to take steps to prevent the recurrence of food emergencies in the region.

The leaders welcomed African development initiatives, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and called upon African countries to take advantage of opportunities provided by the African Growth and Opportunity Act. They recognized that long-term economic prosperity will require strong leadership at home to promote economic freedom, cou-

pled with support from both local and international communities.

The leaders expressed concern over the devastating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other infectious diseases in Africa and their impact on social, economic, and security sectors. Kenya and Ethiopia lauded the Bush Administration for its leadership in the global fight against these diseases and for being the largest, single contributor to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. They resolved to give high priority to the campaign to eradicate these diseases, and the United States reaffirmed its support.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Emomali Rahmonov on the Relationship Between the United States of America and the Republic of Tajikistan
December 10, 2002

We declare our commitment to continue the development of our long-term strategic partnership and cooperation between our nations, based on our common goal of promoting peace, security, economic development, and democracy in the Republic of Tajikistan and in Central Asia.

We note the deepening relationship between our two countries, demonstrated by the appointment of the first Tajik Ambassador in Washington and the beginning of construction for a new U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe. This growing relationship is based on our common goals of security, prosperity, and liberty for the citizens of our nations. We will continue to work together to advance these goals through cooperation on economic and political reform and poverty reduction in Tajikistan, with the aim of more fully integrating the Re-

public of Tajikistan into the global economy and raising the standard of living and respect for human rights. Further, we will maintain our security relationship, working together to combat threats to peace worldwide while further developing Tajikistan's independent ability to address these threats.

We are cognizant of the threats that international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and narcotics trafficking pose to Tajikistan, to Central Asia and to the entire world, and will work together and with others to address these threats while respecting human rights. Further, we pledge to continue the war against terror to a successful conclusion, both in Afghanistan and worldwide. We recognize the threat that the Taliban and al-Qa'ida posed to regional security and the key role Tajikistan plays in the global coalition

against terror. We have worked together closely, and will continue to do so, to combat the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other extremist forces in Central Asia. We welcome the removal of the Taliban from power in Afghanistan, while noting with concern the presence of Taliban and Al-Qa'ida remnants that wish to continue to destabilize the regional situation. Our two countries pledge to support the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan in its efforts to rebuild that country and integrate it into the broader international structure. We will make all necessary efforts to facilitate the provision of aid to Afghanistan, and urge our global partners in this effort to fulfill their pledges of reconstruction aid.

We jointly note the threat that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses to international peace and security, and declare our steadfast opposition to such proliferation. In this regard, we commend the United Nations Security Council for its unanimous passage of Resolution 1441, and call on the Government of Iraq to comply fully with the terms of the resolution by allowing unfettered inspections and destroying all of its weapons of mass destruction.

Recognizing the importance of democratic political systems, rule of law, and market-oriented economic policies in providing for the welfare and stability of our societies, we pledge to further develop the economic relationship between the United States and the Republic of Tajikistan, while working jointly to carry out democratic and legal reforms within Tajikistan that expand fundamental freedoms and human rights.

We further underscore the importance of rule of law as a prerequisite for economic development. The United States welcomes the efforts Tajikistan has made to integrate its economy into the global market, and will continue to assist Tajikistan in reforming its legal structures to better provide for rule of law and economic freedom with the goal of encouraging investment in the Republic of Tajikistan.

We state our commitment to the principles of democracy and human rights, and pledge to work jointly to extend and strengthen civic institutions such as free and independent media, democratic elections, political pluralism, and civil society. In this spirit, we reaffirm our commitment to basic human rights as enshrined in the founding documents of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, of which we are both members. We further make clear our concern regarding the worldwide problem of trafficking in persons, and pledge our mutual assistance to combat in both of our countries this modern form of slavery. Finally, we confirm our joint efforts to enhance understanding between the citizens of our two countries. In this regard, the U.S. government has initiated a substantial program to enhance computer connectivity for Tajikistan's schools, and the U.S. Peace Corps will consider sending an assessment team to Tajikistan in 2003 with the view of establishing a country program there.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the National Strategy To Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction *December 11, 2002*

Today I have issued the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The strategy establishes a comprehensive approach to counter the growing threat