

I have considered the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502 of the Act. In light of these criteria, I have determined that it is appropriate to extend GSP benefits to Algeria. I have also determined that Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and Bahrain have become “high income” countries, and I therefore terminate their designation as beneficiary developing countries effective January 1, 2006. Furthermore, consistent with the Act’s prohibition on designation of European Union member states as beneficiary developing countries, I am termi-

nating such designation for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia when they become European Union member states.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 1, 2004.

NOTE: The related proclamation of March 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on International Agreements *March 1, 2004*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

Consistent with subsection (b) of the Case-Zablocki Act, (1 U.S.C. 112b), I hereby transmit a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard G. Lugar, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the National Drug Control Strategy *March 1, 2004*

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting the 2004 National Drug Control Strategy, consistent with the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1705).

Two years ago, my Administration issued its National Drug Control Strategy setting forth a balanced approach to reducing drug use among teenagers and adults. The Strategy set ambitious two- and five-year performance-based goals: (i) to lower the rate of drug use by 10 percent over two years; and (ii) to lower the rate by 25 percent

over five years. The success of the Strategy can be measured by its results.

I am pleased to report that we have exceeded our two-year goal of reducing drug use among young people. The most recent survey shows an 11 percent drop between 2001 and 2003 in the use of illicit drugs by teenagers. Among teens, some drugs—such as LSD—have dropped to record low levels of use. For others, we are seeing the lowest levels of use in almost a decade.

Despite this good news, drug addiction continues to challenge far too many

Americans. Addiction to drugs destroys ties of trust, family, and friendship, and reduces all the richness of life to a single destructive desire. Almost every American has known someone who has followed the self-destructive path of addiction. Too many Americans want to change a family member's behavior, but are afraid of causing division and, perhaps, estrangement.

Our Strategy proposes a remarkable and unprecedented array of drug control programs, treatment initiatives, and media campaign efforts. But more than any pro-

gram, it seeks to engage the desire of all Americans to make this a better Nation, facing down the lie of addiction, and offering the hope of recovery.

My Administration will continue to place a high priority on reducing drug addiction in America. I ask for your continued support in this critical endeavor.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 1, 2004.

Remarks on the Anniversary of the United States Department of Homeland Security *March 2, 2004*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Please be seated—unless, of course, you don't have a seat. [*Laughter*] Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to join the proud men and women of the Department of Homeland Security in celebrating this agency's first anniversary.

Many of you were here from day one. Others have come aboard in the days since. Yet, from the President to the Secretary to the newest employee, all of us here are tasked with a single, vital mission, to secure the American homeland and to protect the American people. There is no duty more important. We're meeting that duty together, and on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you all for what you do to defend our country.

I appreciate Secretary Ridge's leadership. I plucked him out of the ranks of the Governors because I knew he knew how to manage and to set an agenda. He has not let me down. Along with the other leaders here, he and the team are doing a fantastic job of leading this Department. I appreciate Deputy Secretary Jim Loy as well for his outstanding leadership. I want to thank all the officials who are here.

I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress who have come. Two Texans, Mac Thornberry and Jim Turner, I appreciate you all being here. I appreciate Jennifer Dunn from the great State of Washington and Chris Cox from the State of California. Thanks for taking time to honor these employees today.

I appreciate all the employees who are here. I appreciate you working hard for the American people. I'm sure people don't thank you enough. Well, I'm here to thank you as much as an individual possibly can, for working the long hours, for taking the risks on behalf of the security of this country.

Today I had the honor of meeting the family of Agent Jimmy Epling. Jimmy was the first Department of Homeland Security employee to be killed in the line of duty. He did so rescuing an individual. He risked his life to save a life. And on behalf of our Nation, Monica and Seth and Shaine and Sean and James, and his loving parents, Ken and Amy, thank you for raising such a good son and thank you for having such a good husband. Boys, you need to be proud of your daddy. Thanks for coming.