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Proclamation 6884—Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 1996

April 11, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Today, the nations of the Western Hemisphere share a greater commitment to peace and democracy than they have at any other time in history. This consensus has at its core the ideas that liberalized markets work, that democracy is the foremost means of protecting individual human rights, that free trade is the best mechanism to promote growth, and that all of these principles combine to offer hope for improving people's lives. The interdependence of our many countries ensures our united efforts toward these common goals.

We have seen remarkable success from hemispheric cooperation in recent years—from migration issues, to counter-narcotics measures, to promoting trade. This cooperative spirit energized the Summit of the Americas in 1994, where representatives from 34 democratically-elected governments committed themselves to democratic principles, effective governance, sustainable economic growth, and a cleaner global environment. This historic gathering recognized that peace and economic prosperity in any one country are contingent on the health of its neighbors.

We can also take pride in our hemisphere's abilities to address the challenges of our rapidly changing world. The Mexican financial crisis that shook markets last year was contained and reversed because of U.S.-led international support and the region's governments' redoubled commitment to economic reform. Similarly, the progress toward resolving the border dispute between Peru and Ecuador demonstrated the dedication of the Guarantors of the Rio Protocol and others to keeping our hemisphere on a steady course. Nevertheless, recent violations of international law and human rights are sad reminders that one country continues to refuse to join our family of democratic nations.

As we approach the next century, let us celebrate our achievements and maintain high expectations for the continued progress of our hemispheric partnerships. In doing so, we can ensure that the Americas will continue to prosper, integrate, and solve problems in a cooperative, mutually beneficial manner.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 1996, as Pan American Day and April 14 through April 20, 1996, as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of all other areas under the flag of the United States to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 12, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 16.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Civil War in Liberia

April 11, 1996

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

On April 4, 1996, small arms and mortar fire broke out in Monrovia, Liberia, apparently as the result of renewed fighting between factions led by Charles Taylor and Roosevelt Johnson involved in the civil war in that country. On April 5, groups of angry civilians set up make-shift checkpoints near the international airport and within the city to protest the destruction of their property by the warring factions. On April 6, the American Embassy began receiving calls from American citizens reporting weapons