

millions of athletes whose courage inspires and challenges all of us. And we salute the next generation of Special Olympics heroes who will keep that flame alive in the 21st century.

Now, I'd like to ask all the artists here with us tonight to come back on stage and sing just one more song for you. Eunice, and all the rest of us, and for Special Olympics.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11:10 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Whoopi Goldberg; Special Olympics athlete Loretta Clairborne; and Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder, Special Olympics. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of First Lady Hillary Clinton.

United States-European Union Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Western Balkans

December 18, 1998

Political, civil, and economic instability in some areas of the Western Balkans threatens peace and prosperity in all southeastern Europe and poses serious challenges across Europe and beyond. During the past six months, we have achieved notable successes and are agreed on further cooperative steps in the Western Balkans.

Our envoys in Kosovo, Ambassadors Chris Hill and Wolfgang Petritsch, are working as a team to conclude successfully negotiations on an interim political settlement for Kosovo. In Kosovo, the U.S. and EU are collaborating to ensure implementation of the October 16 OSCE-FRY Agreement, notably in the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM). We are extremely concerned that recent acts of violence in Kosovo could spiral out of control, and call on all parties to preserve the cease fire and cooperate fully with KVM.

We remain committed to enhancing quickly confidence-building and to supporting civil society in Kosovo. The EU welcomes the U.S. initiative to begin quick impact efforts in Kosovo immediately. The U.S. welcomes the European Union's intention to play the leadership role in organizing the inter-

national community's response on reconstruction issues, and pledges its full support. The EU intends to organize an expert-level meeting in January 1999, following the conclusion of the ongoing damage assessment mission. Once a political agreement is in place, further concrete steps on assisting reconstruction and on democratization and civic development will be taken, including convening a donors' conference. We look to the international community to contribute substantially towards the speedy implementation of these endeavors. At present, humanitarian aid should continue, responding to the most urgent needs, in close cooperation between the U.S. and EU and under the coordination of UNHCR, which is the lead agency for humanitarian aid as well as for the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees.

We expect the Albanian, as well as the Bosnian, authorities to take primary responsibility for stabilizing their respective countries and leading them towards full democracy and economic development.

In Albania, we worked together to form the Friends of Albania, which the EU co-chairs with the OSCE; we are both making a substantial political and material commitment to stabilization, democratization and economic reform. We have taken note of the new Government's pledges at the Tirana Conference October 30 to move towards those goals. We welcome the adoption of the new Constitution, which is a fundamental first step in that direction. We strongly urge all political parties to cooperate in the democratic process in the interest of all Albanian people.

We have furthered our cooperation in support of Dayton implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Croatia. The Bosnian national elections in September further advanced democracy and pluralism in that country. The U.S. and EU continue to provide resources to assist Dayton implementation efforts. We call on the authorities in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia to consistently support Dayton implementation efforts and contribute to the process of stabilization and national reconciliation, including by supporting the return of refugees and displaced persons to their previous homes as

a matter of priority. Job creation, through self-sustaining economic development, will help stabilize the political and social situation and will enhance the return to a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. Economic revitalization is essential for sustainable returns, especially in minority areas.

We call on all in the region to support efforts to establish security and economic stability. Without this support, resolving regional conflicts and advancing democratic, civic, and economic reform is only more difficult. We will use our political and economic resources to support those who support these efforts and, more generally, to advance an agenda of democracy, progress toward self-sustaining free market economics, and normal relations with their neighbors. We condemn steps taken by the government in Belgrade to suppress independent media and political opposition, and express strong support for emerging democracy and political pluralism in Montenegro. A Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that respects the democratic and human rights of its citizens and that upholds its international obligations is essential for regional peace and security and its own integration into Europe.

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

**United States-European Union
Statement on Cooperation in the
Global Economy**
December 18, 1998

The U.S. and the EU are engines for global economic growth. We share a common vision of a market-based global economy and particular responsibilities for promoting stability, continued growth and prosperity. We must lead the way in keeping markets open. A rules-based international trade system and a strengthened international financial system are necessary to ensure transparency and predictability and to maintain public confidence in the benefits of open economies. We are concerned about the serious social and economic impact of the financial crisis on many countries, and we will work together with them in the face of their major economic difficulties.

We are committed to promoting open markets through further broad-based liberalization, including through strengthening the multilateral trading system, and through the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) on which we agreed in London in May. We have drawn up, and started to implement, a Joint Action Plan to pursue this Partnership. It will contribute to further market opening and strengthening of links between the U.S. and EU economies in ways that support and point the way for further multilateral liberalization, while benefiting our peoples. The TEP initiative will enable us to launch bilateral negotiations for the further reduction of trade barriers. We have now set in train a regular and comprehensive dialogue between us on multilateral trade issues and future World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. We attach high importance to the full respect of multilateral rules. We are determined to resolve trade disputes between us.

The Mutual Recognition Agreement, which entered into force December 1, is an example of how the U.S. and EU are striving to remove transatlantic barriers. The agreement covers six sectors and will save our private sectors as much as \$1 billion annually. In reducing trade barriers, we re-affirm our commitment to preserving high levels of health, safety, consumer and environmental protection. We strongly support the current bilateral discussions aimed at achieving high standards of data privacy protection and avoiding transatlantic interruptions in exchanges of personal data. While continuing current efforts to avoid such interruptions, we would like to conclude the discussions successfully as soon as possible.

We intend to enhance our economic dialogue and cooperation, both bilaterally and in the context of international institutions and fora, to ensure that we act in a coherent and constructive manner.

We agree on the need to strengthen the international financial system and national financial sectors in order to capture the full benefits of international capital flows and global markets, minimize disruption and better protect the poorest and most vulnerable. It is important that all in the global economy play their part to promote sustainable growth