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Statement on the Situation in Kosovo

January 16, 1999

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the massacre of civilians by Serb security forces that took place last night in the village of Racak in Kosovo. This was a deliberate and indiscriminate act of murder designed to sow fear among the people of Kosovo. It is a clear violation of the commitments Serbian authorities have made to NATO. There can be no justification for it.

The perpetrators must be brought to justice. The Serb authorities must act immediately to identify those responsible. They must cooperate with the Kosovo Verification Mission and the International War Crime Tribunal. They must withdraw security forces, carry out all the commitments they have made to NATO, and cease their repression.

We are in close contact with Secretary-General Solana and our NATO allies. Together, we will work to stop the repression and prevent an escalation of fighting.

It is urgent that these murders not trigger a spiral of reprisals. Both sides have a responsibility to work towards a peaceful resolution of this crisis and for a settlement that allows the people of Kosovo the self-government they so clearly deserve.

Remarks to AmeriCorps Volunteers

January 18, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Good afternoon, everyone.

Audience members. Good afternoon.

The President. First of all, I'd like to say that I am very grateful to be here at Regency House with all of you. I want to thank the residency council for making us feel welcome—Sarah Beaner, Kenneth Brown and others.

I want to say to the members of the press here—you know, the press, they all think that we're all on automatic, because they give us little notes here to read about every place we go. But I think it would be interesting for you to know the note I got on Regency House here: Sarah Beaner is the president of the residency council; Kenneth Brown is the past president and is now serving as the vice president, not such a bad idea. [*Laughter*] Regency House has 157 tenants. The tenant population is made up of seniors and the disabled. They are all current in their rent. [*Laughter*] Good for you; that's great.

Let me say to the mayor and Councilmember Patterson and Delegate Norton, I am honored to be here to participate in Martin Luther King Day as a day of service, as provided by law and in the spirit of what Dr. King said. And I am proud that I live in a city with truly outstanding leadership. Eleanor Holmes Norton has been my friend for a very long time and is one of the most remarkable women in any leadership capacity of any kind in the United States. DC is fortunate to have her.

The mayor, in his former life, was actually a member of our administration in the Agriculture Department. And you know, it didn't really offend me that we'd already torn the wall down by the time he showed up today—[*laughter*]—because he's working hard, and he's got a lot of things to do. And I feel good about what he's going to achieve. And, Mr. Mayor, you just stay on the job, and I'll tear a wall down for you any day your want, any time, anywhere, and I thank you.

I want to thank David Gilmore of the DC Housing Authority and my great member of the White House staff Ben Johnson who did used to be a former director of DC Public Housing. The others whom the Vice President mentioned with AmeriCorps—Deb Jospin, John Gomperts. But mostly I want to thank these young volunteers behind me.

Near the end of Dr. King's life, he envisioned a partnership in America across racial lines. He could never have imagined that America would become so diverse as it is today. But AmeriCorps, it seems to me, is the living, breathing embodiment of the way Martin Luther King thought all of America ought to work. And that's what I wanted to do when we established it.

You might be interested to know that in only 4 years, since we set AmeriCorps up and got it going, more than 100,000 volunteers have joined AmeriCorps. It took the Peace Corps 20 years to reach that milestone. And they have done unbelievable things to make America a better place: helping to deal