AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Address on the Observance of Id al-Fítr

January 19, 1999

On behalf of Muslim Americans and, indeed, all Americans, I would like to send my best wishes to the Islamic world as the holy month of Ramadan draws to a close, and you celebrate the festival of Id al-Fítr. The month of fasting you have completed demands sacrifice and discipline. But it delivers a profound reward, the chance to teach people of every faith what is precious about Islam: its charity, its generosity, its essential humanity. All people in the world are moved by the observance of Ramadan, by the devotion and dignity that makes Islam one of the world's great religions.

I fervently hope that the new Moon will stand for a rising tide of peace on Earth, in the Middle East, Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, Africa, every place where devoted people aspire and deserve to lead lives of fulfillment and self-respect. I especially hope we will see the lives of the Iraqi people improve. They have suffered for too long from oppression and war.

One of the central challenges of our time is to build greater understanding among people who practice different forms of worship. As the leader of a nation of many, many faiths, I pledge that we will do all we can to strengthen relations with the Islamic community around the world in the year ahead. In the United States, we deeply respect the Muslim Americans who observe Ramadan. And we look forward to working with Muslims everywhere, everywhere in the world, to build a world where faith and friendship can truly flourish.

As-salaamu alaykum.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 5:10 p.m. in Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building on January 12 for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency Worldnet, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 19.

Message on the Observance of Id al-Fítr

January 19, 1999

Warm greetings to Muslims across America and around the world as you mark the end of the holy month of Ramadan and celebrate the festival of Id al-Fitr.

The month of fasting that you have just completed demands discipline and a spirit of sacrifice. But it also delivers a profound reward: the opportunity to show people of every faith what is precious about Islam—its charity, its generosity, and its essential humanity. All people in the world are moved by your observance of Ramadan and by the devotion and dignity that make Islam one of the world's great religions.

As you welcome the appearance of the new moon and the close of Ramadan, Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a memorable celebration and for peace, health, and prosperity in the year to come.

Bill Clinton

Statement on the Proposed "Affordable Child Care for Early Success and Security Act"

January 19, 1999

Tonight, in my State of the Union Address, I will outline my agenda to help parents struggling to meet their responsibilities at work and at home. This agenda includes an ambitious initiative to make child care safer, better, and more affordable for America's working families. Today Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D–CT) and many of his Democratic colleagues in the Senate have taken an important step toward reaching that goal by introducing the ''Affordable Child Care for Early Success and Security Act'' (A.C.C.E.S.S.).

This proposal, like mine, significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides greater tax relief to help low- and middle-income families pay for child care and to support parents who chose to stay at home to care for their young children. This

plan dramatically increases after-school opportunities, encourages businesses to provide child care for their employees, promotes early learning and school readiness, and improves child care quality.

The child care ''A.C.C.E.S.S. Act'' builds on the longstanding commitment of Senator Dodd and the cosponsors of this legislation to improving child care for our Nation's children. I look forward to working with Members of Congress in both parties to enact child care legislation this year that will help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and, even more importantly, as parents.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of Military Forces for Stabilization of Areas of the Former Yugoslavia

January 19, 1999

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

In my report to the Congress of June 19, 1998, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

The U.N. Security Council authorized member states to continue SFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1174 of June 15, 1998. The mission of SFOR is to provide a continued military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities, stabilize and consolidate the peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and contribute to a secure environment to facilitate the civilian implementation process to which SFOR provides broad support within its means and capabilities.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia is approximately 6,900. In the last half of 1998, all NATO nations and 19 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided military personnel or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. military personnel are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 2,300 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. The U.S. forces continue to support SFOR in efforts to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes. In the last 6 months, U.S. forces have sustained no fatalities.

A U.S. Army contingent remains deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as part of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). This U.N. peacekeeping force, which includes some 350 U.S. military personnel, observes and monitors conditions along the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The UNPREDEP continues to play a key role in preventing the spillover of ethnic conflict from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) into FYROM and the region. In doing so, it has helped FYROM become a bulwark against the southward spread of the conflict in the FRY. Several U.S. Army support helicopters and approximately 24 personnel are also deployed to provide support to U.S. forces and may provide emergency support to UNPREDEP as required. The U.N. Security Council voted July 21, 1998, to authorize an extension of the UNPREDEP mandate through February 28, 1999. To help maintain stability in the region in light of the situation in Kosovo, we are currently considering the extension of UNPREDEP's mandate.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to