

I'd like to ask the Members of Congress and the administration to come up for the bill signing now.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to James Sullivan, Hudson, NH, who introduced the President, Donna McNamee, Cleveland, OH, Paul Marshall, Wheaton, MD, and Wesley Vinner, Riverdale, MD, citizens who will benefit from the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act; Representative Sherrod Brown; former Senator Bob Dole; Justin Dart, Jr., chairman and founder, Justice For All; Jeanne Lambrew, Senior Health Policy Analyst, National Economic Council; and John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO. H.R. 1180, approved December 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106-170. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**United States-European Union
Summit Statement on Chechnya**
December 17, 1999

The United States and the European Union are deeply concerned about the situation in Chechnya. We recognize Russia's right to uphold its territorial integrity and to defend its citizens from terrorism and lawlessness, and we condemn terrorism in all its manifestations. But we believe that Russia's military tactics in Chechnya are undermining its objectives, creating a humanitarian crisis, endangering innocent civilians, and jeopardizing stability throughout the Caucasus region. A military solution to the conflict is not possible. We call for an immediate and lasting cease-fire throughout Chechnya and a political dialogue that can lead to a durable solution to the crisis.

The indiscriminate use of force against civilians is unacceptable. Providing for the safety of innocent civilians is a fundamental obligation of all states. We call on Russia to respect this principle unconditionally.

We stress that the respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of neighboring states is a fundamental principle of the international system. We are concerned by the impact of the Chechnya conflict on security throughout the Caucasus and stress the importance of avoiding steps that would further undermine regional security.

Displaced persons should be allowed full freedom of movement. Russian and regional

authorities must provide for their well being. The United States and the EU strongly support the courageous efforts of international relief organizations, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced people and others affected by the conflict. We ask Russia to work constructively with these organizations and ensure security for their personnel and access for their operations.

The OSCE Istanbul Summit Declaration noted that the OSCE could contribute to finding a political solution to the conflict. We are encouraged that OSCE Chairman-in-Office Vollebaek was able to visit the North Caucasus. We support his efforts to promote a political dialogue as well as the continuing role of the OSCE in finding a lasting solution to the conflict. We believe that an office of the OSCE Assistance Group should be opened in neighboring Ingushetiya to monitor the humanitarian situation. We call on Russia to respect all of the commitments it has made in the framework of the OSCE. In that regard, we acknowledge Prime Minister Putin's statements that he has held talks with representatives of Chechen President Maskhadov and urge continuation of meaningful discussions with responsible Chechen leaders.

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

**United States-European Union
Summit Statement on Southeast
Europe**
December 17, 1999

We reaffirm our commitment to the emergence of a secure, democratic and prosperous Southeastern Europe. We agree on the central importance of promoting democratic change in Yugoslavia and will remain engaged in enhancing the security of the region until that happens. We will therefore work together with Yugoslav democratic forces, including the Government of Montenegro, to promote such change. We support the efforts of the freely elected government of Montenegro to advance political and economic reform within the FRY. We will also