

Joint Statement by President Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

March 14, 2000

In the last decade of the twentieth century, scientists from around the world initiated one of the most significant scientific projects of all time: to determine the DNA sequence of the entire human genome, the human genetic blueprint. Progressing ahead of schedule, human genome research is rapidly advancing our understanding of the causes of human disease and will serve as the foundation for development of a new generation of effective treatments, preventions, and cures.

To realize the full promise of this research, raw fundamental data on the human genome, including the human DNA sequence and its variations, should be made freely available to scientists everywhere. Unencumbered access to this information will promote discoveries that will reduce the burden of disease, improve health around the world, and enhance the quality of life for all humankind. Intellectual property protection for gene-based inventions will also play an important role in stimulating the development of important new health care products.

We applaud the decision by scientists working on the Human Genome Project to release raw fundamental information about the human DNA sequence and its variants rapidly into the public domain, and we commend other scientists around the world to adopt this policy.

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

Statement on Signing the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000

March 14, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1883, the "Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000."

I fully share the Congress's objective of promoting nonproliferation and combating Iran's efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missile delivery systems. This issue remains at the top of the agenda with Russia as well as with other countries whose companies may be providing

such assistance to Iran. In the case of Russian entities' cooperation with Iran, we have imposed penalties ten times in the past and stand ready to apply them again whenever necessary.

The expansive reporting requirements in this bill in many ways duplicate existing laws, and my Administration will work with the Congress to rationalize these overlapping reporting requirements. We will also seek to rationalize the reporting requirements relating to certain transfers in instances where those transfers are legal under the applicable foreign laws and consistent with the guidelines of the applicable multilateral export control regime.

This bill, as amended, is less problematic than the earlier version that passed the House and will not harm our efforts to halt international cooperation with Iran's WMD and missile programs. Therefore, I have signed H.R. 1883.

I want to make it clear that Russia continues to be a valued partner in the International Space Station (ISS). H.R. 1833 requires certain determinations for purchases from Russia related to the ISS, but does not affect Russia's important role as an ISS partner. My Administration will also continue to work closely with the General Director of the Russian Aviation and Space Agency in his role as Special Representative on non-proliferation.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 14, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 1883, approved March 14, was assigned Public Law No. 106-178.

Remarks at a Rally for Gun Control Legislation

March 15, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Good morning, and welcome to the White House. I want to thank all the Members of the House who are here. We have a large contingent, as you can see, and a bipartisan one, for which I am very grateful. In a moment we will hear from Representatives McCarthy, Morella, and