a great responsibility and an extraordinary opportunity. Our mission now is to build a new world for our children, a world more democratic, more prosperous, and more secure. The CSCE has a vital role to play.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. in Patria Hall at the Budapest Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Thomas Klestil of Austria and President Arpad Goncz of Hungary. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Denuclearization Agreements Signing Ceremony in Budapest

December 5, 1994

President Yeltsin, President Kuchma, President Lukashenko, President Nazarbayev, Prime Minister Major. Today we herald the arrival of a new and safer era. We have witnessed many signatures. Together they amount to one great stride to reduce the nuclear threat to ourselves and to our children. The path to this moment has been long and hard. More than a decade has passed since the first negotiations on the START I treaty. But perseverance, courage, and common sense have triumphed.

Skeptics once claimed that the nuclear threat would actually grow after the Soviet Union dissolved. But because of the wisdom and statesmanship of the leaders who join me here, the skeptics have been proven wrong.

Ukraine's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty completes a bold move away from the nuclear precipice. Ukraine has joined Belarus and Kazakhstan in ridding itself of the terrible weapons each inherited when the Soviet Union dissolved. Presidents Lukashenko, Nazarbayev, and Kuchma have done a very great service for their own people, their neighbors, and indeed all the peoples of the world.

And there is no greater service that the rest of us could do for our nations, our neighbors, and the peoples of the world than to follow the advice already advanced here by President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Major and agree to the indefinite extension of NPT in 1995.

Creating security in the post-cold-war era requires that we unite, not divide. The pledges on security assurances that Prime Minister Major, President Yeltsin, and I have given these three nations move us further in that direction. They underscore our independence, our commitment to the independence, the sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of these states.

And today we have also reached a milestone in fulfilling the promise of this new era by putting the START I treaty into force, the first treaty that requires nuclear powers to actually reduce their strategic arsenals. It creates the most far-reaching verification system ever agreed upon and will eliminate over 9,000 warheads from our arsenals. It lays the foundations for even deeper arms reductions.

President Yeltsin and I have vowed already to work to put the START treaty into force at our next summit in 1995. That will cut our arsenals by another 5,000 warheads. Together these treaties will leave the United States and the former Soviet Union with only a third of the warheads they possessed at the height of the cold war. They will help us to lead the future to a direction we have all dreamed of, one in which the nuclear threat that has hung over heads for almost a half century now is dramatically reduced.

On this historic afternoon, we have shown that today's community of free nations can and will create a safer globe than did the divided world of yesterday. Together we have helped to beat back the threat of nuclear war and lighted the way to a more peaceful day when the shadow of that destruction is finally vanquished from the Earth.

I thank you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:41 a.m. in Patria Hall at the Budapest Convention Center, at a signing ceremony in which the parties to the START I treaty exchanged documents of ratification formally bringing START I into force. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia,

AUTHENTICATED U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION GPO

President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine, President Aleksandr Lukashenko of Belarus, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, and Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom.

Remarks to the American Community in Budapest
December 5, 1994

Thank you, Ambassador Blinken and Mrs. Blinken, ladies and gentlemen, and boys and girls, and people associated with the American Embassy, with our CSCE delegation, to the Peace Corps volunteers, the American-Hungarian Chamber of Commerce members who are here.

I am delighted to be here on this all-too-brief trip. I'd like to point out some of the people who came with me: Our Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, is here; and from the United States Congress, Senator Dennis DeConcini from Arizona, Congressman Steny Hoyer from Maryland, and Congressman and Mrs. Tom Lantos from Hungary—and California.

This is a very important trip for the United States because I came here to reaffirm our Nation's commitment to a secure and united Europe. As the Ambassador said, we put the START I nuclear reduction treaty into effect today, and Ukraine has joined Belarus and Kazakhstan in acceding to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We strengthened the CSCE to help to prevent ethnic and regional conflicts. So as a result of what has happened today, this world is a safer place.

The START I treaty alone will permit us to reduce the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the former Soviet Union countries by 9,000 nuclear warheads, to destroy delivery systems with the best verification systems ever. It will permit us to now start work on START II, which will cut our arsenals by another 5,000 warheads. This means that when we finish this work, we will have reduced the nuclear arsenals of the world by more than two-thirds over their cold war height. That's good news for the children in this audience and for the rest of us as well.

One of the things that we have got to do now is to keep working until we achieve next year an indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, so that we can continue to keep down the risks of the development of nuclear weapons, especially in an era in which the biggest problem may be the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to heretofore unusual and unconventional hands.

I'd like to say a brief word about this CSCE meeting. The United States believes the CSCE has a vital role to play in promoting democracy and diminishing conflict throughout Europe. We believe it can help nations work together to bring democracy and prosperity to their peoples and to continue our effort of promoting European unity.

Our host, Hungary, like its democratic neighbors, is making steady and strong progress toward full integration into Europe. I believe it can and will complete its transformation to a free market. I believe its commitment to playing an important, responsible role in the new Europe is good news for all of us.

Last January, almost a year ago, I went to Brussels and then on to Prague and on to Russia to begin the work of building a new and united Europe. In the nearly one year since, I have come back to this continent three times to work toward that goal.

From our initiatives to open and to expand NATO, to reducing the threat of nuclear weapons, to making trade more free and fair, to building up institutions like the CSCE, to working toward preventing conflicts before they get out of hand, through all these efforts, this European Continent is becoming more secure, more prosperous, and more united.

Yes, there are problems, and there always will be as long as human beings populate the globe. But we are clearly moving in the right direction, and that is good for the United States.

As I close, let me say a special word of thanks to the American missions in Hungary and to the CSCE staff. I didn't want to leave Budapest without having a chance just to tell you how much we appreciate your service, your sacrifice at a time of very great challenge. I also thank the Peace Corps volunteers for their important