Russia-U.S. Joint Statement on the Highly Enriched Uranium Agreement:
Transparency Measures
April 21, 1996

The United States and Russia have agreed on transparency measures that provide assurances that the sides are fulfilling the obligations undertaken under the HEU Agreement to transform “megatons into megawatts.”

The transparency measures that have been developed are the culmination of two years of negotiations between official U.S. and Russian delegations and are evidence that irreversible nuclear disarmament is achievable if we work together. By blending-down HEU derived from nuclear weapons to low-enriched uranium that can only be used as fuel in commercial nuclear power reactors, we ensure that this material can never again be used in nuclear weapons.

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

Remarks on Earth Day in Great Falls, Maryland
April 22, 1996

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for being here today and for the work that you do. I want to thank the Vice President for being the constant conscience of our administration and of the national debate on the environment. I thank Anthony Hinklebrandt and Ashley King for the example they are setting for the young people of America. I want to thank these young folks with the Montgomery County Conservation Corps and the others who have volunteered to work in this park.

I want to say a special word of thanks to the employees of the National Park Service all over this country and here. They do a magnificent job for America. I want to thank Carol Browner, our EPA Administrator, and Katie McGinty, who represents the Nation’s environmental concerns in the Environmental Council in the White House. And I want to thank Secretary Babbitt, who can’t be here because he can’t be in more than one place at once; even Bruce Babbitt can’t do that. And, as the Vice President said, he’s at the Sterling Forest event this morning representing us.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who are here for their fidelity to the Nation’s environment and their willingness to stand and be counted in some pretty difficult moments over the last year or so. They have helped us to continue our commitment and to protect this country’s natural resources. And I want you to know that I never appreciated them more than I have in the last year or so when they’ve been in some of the difficult challenges they’ve been in. I thank them all, these who are here and their counterparts.

You know, I just came back, literally just came back from a remarkable journey all around the world. I flew from here to Alaska and refueled, and then I went to Korea and Japan and on to St. Petersburg and Moscow. And I was thinking, standing here today, I saw some of the most magnificent manmade creations anywhere in the world: the Imperial Palace in Tokyo; the great Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; the entire Kremlin has just been redone and restored to its historical grandeur. But none of it is any more beautiful than this wonderful nature that God has given us right here in this national park.

And not everybody can travel to see the great palaces of the world. Even the great art galleries of the world are beyond the reach of many of our fellow citizens. But everybody can come to this park without regard to their income, their station in life, what their other resources are. This belongs to all the American people, and we have to dedicate ourselves to making sure that as long as there is an America there will be a national park system with these treasures there for every single citizen of this country.

We have done a lot of work since I became President to try to improve our national parks.
and to preserve them. We are dramatically cut-
tting back on noise from aircraft flights over the
Grand Canyon and the Rocky Mountain parks
and other treasures. We are moving, I say as
I hear the plane, to restore a natural quiet in
our parks. We are expanding the Point Reyes
National Seashore in California, where Hillary
and I spent our second wedding anniversary,
by 38,000 acres. We are calling on Congress
to pass legislation to designate new wilderness
areas and purchase the Sterling Forest in the
New York-New Jersey border. And I am direct-
ing the Park Service to take more than a dozen
other steps to make visiting the parks more
pleasurable for America's families and for our
guests from all around the world. Our duty is
to pass on to future generations these treasures
that God has given to us.

Remember, it was a great Republican Presi-
dent, Theodore Roosevelt, who set our Nation
on the path of conservation. In 1908 he said,
"Any right-thinking parent earnestly desires and
strives to leave a child both an untarnished
name and a reasonable equipment for the strug-
gle of life. So this Nation as a whole should
earnestly desire and struggle to leave to the
next generation the national honor unstained
and the national resources unexhausted." It
sounded good in 1908, and it's even more im-
portant as we stand on the edge of a new cen-
tury.

Let me say that I consider that I was very
lucky as a child to have the privilege of being
raised in a national park. My hometown is the
only city in America that actually contains a
national park, Hot Springs National Park. And
I grew up in a State where more than half
the land was covered by forests. I took for grant-
ed things that many children in our cities never,
ever see.

And frankly, I had to grow up a little before
I realized that none of that could be taken for
granted. And a lot of people along the way had
a big influence on me; the most recent, of
course, is the Vice President. But since he's
here today I want to thank my senior Senator,
Dale Bumpers, who has been one of the most
courageous conservationists and environmental-
ists for the last 25 years in America. Thank
you. He taught me by the power of example
that Governors have a responsibility to the envi-
ronment as well.

And so I say to all of you, there's something
for each of us to do. But the remarkable resur-
gence in support for clean air, for clean water,
for a safe environment in our urban areas as
well as our rural areas, for standing up for our
national parks, that has not come from those
of us in public life. Fundamentally, it has come
from those of you who are the citizens who
live in our neighborhoods and walk our streets
and climb our mountains and walk our trails
day-in and day-out. You have given America
back its soul, its conscience, and its commitmen-
ton the environment. And don't ever give up
your responsibility for doing that.

So on this Earth Day, as we stand beneath
the eagle in this wonderful treasure that we
have been given, let us vow that there is more
to do. None of our children should have to
live near a toxic waste dump or eat food
poisoned by pesticides. Our grandchildren
should not have to live in a world stripped of
its natural beauty. We can and we must protect
the environment while advancing the prosperity
of the American people and people throughout
the world.

When it comes to protecting the environment,
we can't turn back. We have to go forward,
and it has to become a part of our every deci-
sion as a people. If we make that commitment
and stick to it, then America will have a bright
future indeed.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. at the
Great Falls observation deck in the Chesapeake
and Ohio Canal National Historic Park. In his
remarks, he referred to Anthony Hildebrandt of Boy
Scout Troop 241, and Ashley King of the Girl
Scout Council of the Nation's Capital. The related
memorandums of April 22 on planning to address
impacts of transportation on national parks and
public-private partnerships for protection of the
national parks are listed in Appendix D at the end
of this volume.