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a landmark ruling confirming my decision that the Food and Drug Administration has authority to regulate tobacco products to protect our children's health. These victories for the public health drove the tobacco companies to the bargaining table and extracted concessions from them that would have been unimaginable just a short time ago.

I commend the attorneys general and other people working with them, including children's health leaders, for their hard work in negotiating this agreement in a way that seeks to advance our struggle to protect the health of children against the dangers of tobacco. They deserve our thanks for doing so.

We must now carefully consider whether approving this proposed settlement will protect the public health—and particularly our children's health—to the greatest extent possible. Until now, we have not had the opportunity to review the actual terms of the agreement, and we have not concluded whether it is in the best interests of the public health. Over the next several weeks, we will undertake a thorough public health review. I am asking Bruce Reed, my Domestic Policy Adviser—along with Donna Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services—to engage in extensive consultations with the public health community and others to subject this agreement to the strictest scrutiny. They will report to me on whether this agreement represents the best means of protecting the Nation's public health interests.

In the meantime, we will fight as hard as ever to ensure that the FDA rule stands. Each day, 3,000 young people become regular smokers; 1,000 of them will have their lives cut short as a result. Protecting the health of the public and these children will be our measure of this proposed agreement.

Statement on the European Union-United States Mutual Recognition Agreements

June 20, 1997

I am pleased the United States and the European Union have initialed in Denver today landmark agreements that represent a new level of transatlantic cooperation. These accords will reduce trade barriers, increase U.S. exports, and promote more efficient regulation in sectors that account for approximately $50 billion in two-way trade between the United States and Europe, including telecommunications equipment, information technology, medical devices, and pharmaceuticals.

The Mutual Recognition Agreements will eliminate the need for duplicative testing, inspection, or certification of products destined for trade on each side of the Atlantic, while protecting the health and safety of consumers on both sides of the Atlantic. By their very nature, these accords represent and require the highest level political, economic, and regulatory cooperation between nations. When implemented, this package will serve to increase U.S. exports by saving manufacturers up to 10 percent of the cost of delivering U.S. exports to Europe and enhance transatlantic cooperation to protect the health and safety of our peoples. This is a good agreement for the American people and is good news for manufacturers, workers, and consumers in the United States and Europe.

I want to thank the TransAtlantic Business Dialogue for its important role in supporting these negotiations. I also want to congratulate Commerce Secretary William Daley, U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, Under Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat, and all the U.S. agencies that showed creativity and persistence in forging agreements that will help shape the transatlantic marketplace.

Joint Statement by France, Russia, and the United States on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

June 20, 1997

On the occasion of our meeting in Denver, we, the Presidents of France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, as leaders of the countries that co-chair the OSCE Minsk Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh, express our deep concern over the continuing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It has seriously undermined economic and social development and prosperity throughout the Caucasus region. It has created thousands of victims. Over a million people are still displaced from their homes.

We are encouraged by the continued observance of the cease-fire. However, the cease-fire by itself is insufficient. Without progress toward a durable settlement, the cease-fire could break down. The international community thus has repeatedly called for a settlement; we believe there should be no delay in establishing a stable and lasting peace in the region.

To that end we have committed our countries to work closely together to assist the efforts of the parties to negotiate a resolution to the conflict. The French, Russian, and U.S. Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Conference have presented a new proposal for a comprehensive settlement, taking into consideration the legitimate interests and concerns of all parties. It represents an appropriate basis for achieving a mutual agreement. The primary responsibility, however, rests with the parties and their leaders. We call upon them to take a positive approach, to build upon this proposal and to negotiate an early settlement.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Military Forces for Stabilization of the Balkan Peace Process

June 20, 1997

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

In my report to the Congress of December 20, 1996, 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), and on the beginning of the withdrawal of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), which completed its mission and transferred authority to the SFOR 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.

We continue to work in concert with others in the international community to encourage the parties to fulfill their commitments under the Dayton Peace Agreement and to build on the gains achieved over the last 18 months. It remains in the United States national interest to help bring peace to Bosnia, both for humanitarian reasons and to arrest the dangers the fighting in Bosnia represented to security and stability in Europe generally. Through American leadership and in conjunction with our NATO allies and other countries, we have seen real and continued progress toward sustainable peace in Bosnia. We have also made it clear to the former warring parties that it is they who are ultimately responsible for implementing the Peace Agreement.

The United Nations Security Council authorized member states to establish the follow-on force in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1088 of December 12, 1996. The SFOR's tasks are to deter or prevent a resumption of hostilities or new threats to peace, to consolidate IFOR's achievements and to promote a climate in which the civilian-led peace process can go forward. Subject to this primary mission, SFOR will provide selective support, within its capabilities, to civilian organizations implementing the Dayton Peace Agreement. The parties to the