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Remarks at the Presentation of the Final Communique of the Summit of the Eight in Denver

June 22, 1997

As I begin, I would like to thank the city of Denver and the people of Colorado for the wonderful work they did to make us feel welcome here. I thank the people who worked on behalf of the United States to put this together, Harold Ickes, Deb Willhite, and our whole team. And most of all, I want to thank my colleagues for their hard work and for the spirit of cooperation that prevailed here in Denver.

We've agreed on new steps to organize our nations to lay a strong foundation in the 21st century, to prepare our people and our economies for the global marketplace, to meet new transnational threats to our security, to integrate new partners into the community of free-market democracies.

Russia's role here at the summit reflects the great strides that Russia has made in its historic transformation. We look forward to Russia's continued leadership and participation, and we thank President Yeltsin for all he has done.

On behalf of my colleagues, I'd like to summarize several key points in our communique. First, as leaders of the world's major industrial democracies, we feel a special responsibility to work together, to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges of the global economy, and to ensure opportunity for all segments of our societies. We explored what we can do to create more jobs for our people, and we look forward to the conferences on employment in Japan this fall and the United Kingdom early next year. We believe we have much to learn from each other. We also discussed the challenges our nations face as our populations grow older and how we can keep our senior citizens living productive lives well into their later years.

Globalization brings with it problems none of us can conquer alone. This year we intensified our common efforts to meet new transnational threats, like environmental degradation, terrorism, drugs, crime, and infectious disease.

We are also determined to do our part to protect our environment for future generations. Among other measures, we recommitted ourselves to the principles of the Rio Summit. We intend to reach an agreement in Kyoto to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to respond to the problem of global warming. We discussed how best to protect the Earth's forests and oceans, and we are clearly committed to doing that together as well.

Last year we adopted an ambitious agenda to fight crime and terrorism. Since then we have taken concrete steps, from improving airline security to denying safe haven for criminals. This year we'll make special efforts to fight high-tech crimes such as those involving computer and telecommunications technology.

We've also made important progress in promoting nuclear safety and security, particularly in combating nuclear smuggling and in managing the growing stockpiles of plutonium from dismantled nuclear warheads.

We launched a new effort to stem the spread of infectious diseases. In the coming year, we'll be working together to improve global surveillance to provide early warning, to better coordinate our responses, and to strengthen public health systems, especially in the developing world. We've also pledged to accelerate our efforts to develop an HIV/AIDS vaccine.

As we move forward with the integration of new democracies and market economies, we're determined that no part of the world will be left behind. We agreed upon a package of political and economic measures to ensure that African nations share with us the benefits of globalization. We've also continued our efforts to strengthen and spread democracy and freedom around the world.

Finally, we discussed a number of political issues of critical importance to our nations, including Bosnia, the Middle East, and Hong Kong. Next week will represent an historic moment as Hong Kong returns to Chinese sovereignty. We reaffirmed our strong interest in Hong Kong's future and our shared conviction on the importance of China's adherence to its commitments under the 1984 agreement. We appreciate in particular the devotion that Prime Minister Blair and his government attach to this endeavor.

As we worked together to promote the progress of market democracies, we reaffirmed our intention to ensure that those states that

stand outside our community, such as Iran, Iraq, and Libya, fully adhere to the fundamental norms we all agree should guide us into the next century.

We leave Denver renewed by our strength—the strength of our common efforts to prepare our people to succeed in the global economy and the global society of the 21st century. Again, let me thank my fellow leaders for their extraordinary work. I think it's been a very good summit. And again I thank the people of Denver and Colorado for their hospitality.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:58 p.m. at the Denver Public Library. In his remarks, he referred to Harold Ickes, Director of Summit Affairs; Debbie Willhite, Executive Director of the summit; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

The President's News Conference in Denver
June 22, 1997

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Let me say I have a brief opening statement, and then I will open the floor to questions. I know we also have some members of the international press here, and I'll take several questions from the American press first, and then I'll try to alternate a bit. And I think I have a general idea of where everyone is.

Let me begin by saying that over the past 4 years I have worked with our partners in these summits to focus the major industrial democracies of the world on both the opportunities and the challenges that we face as we move toward the 21st century. Together, we worked to prepare our economies to meet new transnational threats to our security, to integrate new partners into our community of free market democracies.

The summit communique I summarized just a short while ago demonstrates that here in Denver we have actually made real progress on problems that matter to our people. To prevent financial crises from one country from sending shock waves around the world, something we have seen on two different occasions in the last few years, we've strengthened our network of banking and market officials to monitor financial policies and police risky practices.

We moved forward in our fight against new security threats that confront all our people. We intend to step up our collective efforts against the growing international problem of high-tech and computer-related crime. We agreed to work more closely to stem the spread of materials of mass destruction that could be used in terrorist attacks. To help ensure that as we dismantle nuclear weapons, dangerous materials don't fall into the wrong hands, we'll tighten control on plutonium stockpiles and establish a rapid response network to prevent nuclear smuggling.

Together, we've begun to tackle another very dangerous threat we'll all face together in the years ahead: infectious diseases that can span the planet in the space of an airline flight. We've agreed to create a global early warning system to detect outbreaks and help us to get the right medicines where they're needed quickly.

And in all of these efforts, we believe we are stronger because we now have Russia as a partner. I'm pleased that for the first time Russia took part in our summit from the start and that this week we reached agreement on Russia's joining the Paris Club for creditor nations—evidence of Russia's emergence as a full member of the community of democracies.

The progress we've made here in Denver demonstrates again what I have said so many times in the last 5 years. In this new era, foreign policy and domestic policy are increasingly intertwined. For us to be strong at home, we must lead in the world. And for us to be able to lead in the world, we must have a strong and dynamic economy at home and a society that is addressing its problems aggressively and effectively.

To continue that path, let me say, there are some things we have to embrace on the homefront and on the international front. First, Congress must pass a balanced budget plan consistent with the agreement we made and with our