

our energy companies as they work with you. Our diplomats and energy experts will help to facilitate solutions that meet the needs of all the Caspian states in Turkey. Secretary Richardson's presence here today is evidence of our continuing commitment.

We understand that today represents just the beginning of the intensive commercial phase of this work. In the months ahead, our Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Trade and Development Agency all will work with you on a commercial financing package.

Nearly 700 years ago, this part of the world was so rich in oil that a visitor to Baku described it as blazing like a fire all night. It has been many years since the people of this region had

the freedom and security to realize their vast potential. Today, they have the freedom, they have the security, and today their leaders have shown the vision that will enable this ancient crossroads once again to light the world and brighten all our futures.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:35 p.m. in the Blue Room at Ciragan Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey; Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway; President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan; President Saparmurat Miyazov of Turkmenistan; President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan; and President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia.

## Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

*November 18, 1999*

The parties in Northern Ireland, working with George Mitchell, have taken a powerful step toward lasting peace. I warmly welcome Senator Mitchell's final report and support his conclusions fully. We should all take heart from the fact that the parties have strongly reaffirmed their commitment to the Good Friday accord. In a spirit of unprecedented mutual understanding, they have addressed issues of deep concern to one another. Together, they have

shaped the outlines of the way ahead, as described by Senator Mitchell today. I urge the parties to maintain this level of dialog with each other and with the public at large in the days ahead and to proceed with rapid implementation of the agreement. Once again, I want to express my deepest appreciation to Senator Mitchell for his dedication to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

## Statement on Assistance for Southeast Europe

*November 18, 1999*

I am pleased that yesterday in Brussels the international community pledged over \$1 billion in new assistance to consolidate peace and promote economic recovery in Kosovo. I am particularly pleased that our European partners committed the lion's share of this amount, with the European Commission and EU members together pledging over three-quarters of a billion dollars and additional pledges from other European states.

These contributions will not only provide a significant boost to economic revitalization and

reconstruction but also help to fund public administration, establish a civil emergency service corps, strengthen public security and the rule of law, promote market reforms, and encourage private investment. We did our part by announcing plans to provide \$157 million for Kosovo, pending final action on the budget before Congress.

Today at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, Europe demonstrated its strong leadership in support of recovery and stabilization throughout