

I do want to say that a member of my Cabinet, Carlos Gutierrez, has joined us. Mr. Secretary, thank you for coming.

And finally, Mr. Commissioner, we are so lucky to have Shelby Shayler with us today. She will be presenting you and I with the first ball, but not quite yet. Before we do, we're going to recite the Little League oath.

Are the players ready? All right, here we go.

[At this point, the pledge was recited.]

Play ball!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainer Kenny Chesney, who sang the national anthem; ESPN radio talk show hosts Mike Golic and Mike Greenberg; and Shelby Shayler, member, Naval Air Station Little League, Norfolk, VA.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Reauthorize the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

July 16, 2008

I thank the Senate for the strong, bipartisan vote today to pass important, life-saving legislation reauthorizing the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). I appreciate the efforts of Majority Leader Reid, Senators Biden and Lugar, and all other Senators from both sides of the aisle who came together today to ensure that America's generosity in battling HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases around the globe will continue in a manner consistent with the program's successful founding principles.

When we launched this program in 2003, about 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS. Today, PEPFAR supports life-saving antiretroviral treatment for more than 1.7 million people around the world. PEPFAR has also supported treatment and

prevention programs that have helped HIV-positive women give birth to nearly 200,000 infants who are HIV-free. PEPFAR is the largest international health initiative in history to fight a single disease.

Traveling in Africa earlier this year, Laura and I had our most recent opportunity to witness the effectiveness of this program. We were honored to see the doctors, nurses, and caregivers of all faiths working to save the lives of their fellow citizens. And we met the patients, including many children, who understand and appreciate America's generosity.

With passage of today's bill, we are one step closer to ensuring that this excellent program continues to help those in need. I encourage the full Congress to move quickly to send me final legislation that I can sign.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Former Liberian Regime of Charles Taylor
July 16, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency and related measures dealing with the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor are to continue in effect beyond July 22, 2008.

Today, Liberia continues its peaceful transition to a democratic order under the administration of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The Government of Liberia has implemented reforms that have allowed for the removal of international sanctions on Liberian timber and diamonds, and Liberia is participating in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to ensure that its natural resources are used to benefit the people and country of Liberia, rather than to fuel conflict. Charles Taylor is standing trial in The Hague by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. However, stability in Liberia is still fragile.

The regulations implementing Executive Order 13348 clarify that the subject of this national emergency has been and remains limited to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor and specified other persons and not the country, citizens, Government, or Central Bank of Liberia.

The actions and policies of former Liberian President Charles Taylor and other persons—in particular their unlawful depletion of Liberian resources, their trafficking in illegal arms, and their formation of irregular militia—continue to undermine Liberia's transition to democracy and the orderly development of its political, administrative, and economic institutions and resources. These actions and policies pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States, and for these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 16, 2008.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Poland-United States Social Security Agreement
July 16, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law

95–216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith the Agreement Between the United States of America and Poland on