Proclamation 7332 of August 1, 2000

Helsinki Human Rights Day, 2000

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

Twenty-five years ago today, in a world marked by brutal divisions and ideological conflict, the United States joined 33 European nations and Canada in signing the Helsinki Final Act. That watershed event established the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and affirmed an international commitment to respect “freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”

During the Cold War, the Helsinki Principles were the rallying point for courageous men and women who confronted tyranny—often at great personal risk—to win the fundamental freedoms set forth by the Final Act. Today, citizens of our vast Euro-Atlantic community from Vancouver to Vladivostok live by, or aspire to live, by those fundamental freedoms. The Helsinki Final Act has been instrumental in the progress we have made together toward building a Europe that is whole and free; a Europe where our partnership for peace is overcoming the possibility of war. The Helsinki Final Act continues to shape our vision for the future of transatlantic cooperation, and the Helsinki accords remain the basic definition of common goals and standards for how all countries in the new Europe should treat their citizens and one another.

The evolution of the CSCE into the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reflects the changing face of Europe. The OSCE’s integrated structure of commitments in the areas of human rights, economics, arms control, and conflict resolution provides a defining framework for a free and undivided Europe. The United States will continue to promote the OSCE’s efforts to build security within and cooperation among democratic societies; to defuse conflicts; to battle corruption and organized crime; and to champion human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law throughout the Euro-Atlantic community. We remain committed to the OSCE’s essential work of bringing peace and civil society back to Bosnia and Kosovo, and we are grateful to the many dedicated men and women engaged in the OSCE’s field missions, who in many ways are our front line of conflict prevention in Europe.

Today, as we mark the 25th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, the United States takes pride in remembering our role as one of its original signatories—a ringing call for freedom and human dignity that played a decisive role in lifting the Iron Curtain and ending the tragic division of Europe.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim August 1, 2000, as Helsinki Human Rights Day and reaffirm our Nation’s support for the full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act. I urge the American people to observe this anniversary with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that reflect our dedication to the noble principles of human rights and democracy. I also call upon the govern-
ments and peoples of all other signatory states to renew their commit-
ment to comply with the principles established and consecrated in the
Helsinki Final Act.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day
of August, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independ­
ence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7333 of August 24, 2000

Minority Enterprise Development Week, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Today, America is enjoying the longest economic expansion in our his­
tory, with 22 million new jobs created since my Administration took
office in 1993 and the lowest unemployment and inflation rates in
more than 30 years. The American people are looking to the future
with renewed hope and optimism, eager to embrace the exciting oppor­
tunities and meet the new challenges of a dynamic and evolving global
marketplace.

If we are to extend this remarkable period of growth and sustain our
leadership of the world economy, we must use this time of extraor­
dinary prosperity to ensure that every citizen of our Nation plays a role
in our economic growth and benefits from its rewards. One of the sur­
est means of achieving that goal is to promote the full inclusion of mi­
nority enterprises in the mainstream of our economy.

My Administration has encouraged the growth and success of minority
businesses by ensuring their participation in Government procurement;
introducing the New Markets Initiative to bring jobs and capital to
America's underserved communities; and strengthening the Commu­
nity Reinvestment Act. Over the last 8 years, the Small Business Ad­
ministration has guaranteed $18 billion in loans to more than 80,000
minority-owned firms. And the Department of Commerce's Minority
Business Development Agency (MBDA) has assisted more than 430,000
minority-owned businesses with start-up and expansion financing. At
Minority Business Development Centers across the country, the MBDA
also assists minority clients by providing a variety of business services,
including the preparation of business plans, market research and devel­
opment, financial counseling, and bid preparation.

All Americans stand to benefit from the success of our minority entre­
preneurs. With energy and determination, these hardworking men and
women create jobs, attract investment, bolster pride, and generate reve­
uue in communities across our Nation. People of different races, peo­
ple of diverse ethnic backgrounds, people with disabilities—all have
skills, new ideas, and fresh perspectives to bring to the marketplace.
Minority entrepreneurs have unique contributions to make to our econ­
omy and the talent and imagination to produce goods and services that
meet the needs of their fellow Americans and of consumers around the
world.