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Our forces also attacked a factory in Sudan associated with the bin Ladin network. The factory was involved in the production of materials for chemical weapons.

The United States does not take this action lightly. Afghanistan and Sudan have been warned for years to stop harboring and supporting these terrorist groups. But countries that persistently host terrorists have no right to be safe havens.

Let me express my gratitude to our intelligence and law enforcement agencies for their hard, good work. And let me express my pride in our Armed Forces who carried out this mission while making every possible effort to minimize the loss of innocent life.

I want you to understand, I want the world to understand that our actions today were not aimed against Islam, the faith of hundreds of millions of good, peace-loving people all around the world, including the United States. No religion condones the murder of innocent men, women, and children. But our actions were aimed at fanatics and killers who wrap murder in the cloak of righteousness and in so doing profane the great religion in whose name they claim to act.

My fellow Americans, our battle against terrorism did not begin with the bombing of our Embassies in Africa, nor will it end with today's strike. It will require strength, courage, and endurance. We will not yield to this threat. We will meet it, no matter how long it may take. This will be a long, ongoing struggle between freedom and fanaticism, between the rule of law and terrorism. We must be prepared to do all that we can for as long as we must.

America is and will remain a target of terrorists precisely because we are leaders, because we act to advance peace, democracy, and basic human values, because we're the most open society on Earth, and because, as we have shown yet again, we take an uncompromising stand against terrorism.

But of this I am also sure: The risks from inaction, to America and the world, would be far greater than action, for that would embolden our enemies, leaving their ability and their willingness to strike us intact. In this case, we knew before our attack that these groups already had planned further actions against us and others.

I want to reiterate: The United States wants peace, not conflict. We want to lift lives around the world, not take them. We have worked for peace in Bosnia, in Northern Ireland, in Haiti, in the Middle East and elsewhere. But in this day, no campaign for peace can succeed without a determination to fight terrorism. Let our actions today send this message loud and clear: There are no expendable American targets; there will be no sanctuary for terrorists; we will defend our people, our interests, and our values; we will help people of all faiths, in all parts of the world, who want to live free of fear and violence. We will persist, and we will prevail.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:32 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the 1999 Federal Pay Raise

August 20, 1998

I am announcing today my support for a 3.6 percent pay raise in 1999 for Federal civilian employees and military personnel. This increase is consistent with preliminary appropriations and authorizing actions already taken in Congress. I urge the Congress to enact legislation providing for such an increase, and if Congress fails to act, I will use my executive authority to guarantee that a 3.6 increase takes effect.

An increase of 3.6 percent for Federal employees would essentially allow Federal pay to match the growth in private sector wages. Given the high level of productivity of Federal employees and the continuing trend of solid real income gains in the private sector, I believe that Federal employees deserve the recognition and compensation that this increase provides. I will continue to work with Congress and labor to review the means by which we ensure fair and equitable pay.

Since the first days of this administration, the Vice President and I have worked to streamline the Federal Government. Today, the Government operates more efficiently and better serves the American people. This success would not have been possible without Government employees who have been

called upon to work harder and to do more with less. Our Federal employees have risen to that mission, and with this action, we recognize their efforts.

Proclamation 7116—Women's Equality Day, 1998

August 20, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since the earliest days of our democracy, Americans have taken great pride and found great purpose in our pursuit of equality. It is a right for which many have bravely struggled and the ideal that challenges us even today to build a more perfect union and to forge a future in which our children know no boundaries to their dreams. Each year, on Women's Equality Day, we rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of full equality for women and girls in our society.

This year, as we reflect on the magnificent journey and the extraordinary heroines and heroes of the women's rights movement in America, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first women's rights convention, which took place in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 and set our Nation on a course toward equality. It was at this historic gathering that pioneers such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Mary Ann McClintock, and Frederick Douglass signed the Declaration of Sentiments—a document unequivocally affirming that all men and women are created equal. Encouraged by the truth of their convictions, these determined women and men set out to make equality for women a reality in America.

In the decades following the convention at Seneca Falls, many of the rights expressed in the prophetic Declaration of Sentiments became law. The ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution secured a woman's right to vote; the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 barred employment discrimination; and the enactment of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 guaranteed equal opportunity in education and sports.

This year, we recognize another milestone on the road to women's equality: the 35th anniversary of the enactment of the Equal Pay Act, which for the first time in our Nation's history guaranteed equal pay to women who perform the same jobs as men. Only a generation ago, a woman could legally be paid less for her time and talent solely because of her gender. Today, we realize that the denial of equal pay not only unfairly limits a woman's ability to provide for her family's economic security, but also diminishes her dignity by belittling the value of her labor.

While we have made progress in closing this pay gap in the 35 years since the enactment of the Equal Pay Act, women today continue to make less than men for the same work—earning 76 cents for every dollar paid to a man. As we celebrate the Equal Pay Act's anniversary, we must reaffirm our commitment to making equal pay for equal work a reality in the workplace. My Administration supports new proposed legislation that will close the pay gap completely, strengthen enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, and toughen penalties for violations.

My Administration is striving to ensure women's equality in other areas of our society. We have dramatically increased the funding for research, prevention, and treatment of diseases that predominantly affect women. Through the Family and Medical Leave Act that I signed and our proposed child care initiative, we are working to help women balance their responsibilities at home and on the job. During the past 5 years, the Small Business Administration has tripled loans to women-owned businesses, and we have strengthened enforcement of Title IX to ensure that education programs, activities, and institutions receiving Federal funds do not discriminate on the basis of gender.

On Women's Equality Day, as we look back on what we have accomplished, we also recognize how far we have to go before we complete the journey that began so long ago. As women continue to distinguish themselves in boardrooms, classrooms, courtrooms, and family rooms across America, we must renew our efforts to empower all women with the rights and opportunities promised by our founders and fought for by the heroic women