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We will be working with them to get whatever appropriate assistance is required. And our thoughts and prayers are with them. And I expect to get further briefing from Mr. Witt to determine what, if anything else, we should do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jim Dailey of Little Rock, AR. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Conflict

January 22, 1999

The United States remains deeply concerned about the risk of armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and strongly committed to help find a peaceful resolution to their border dispute.

As part of this effort, I asked former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake to return to Eritrea and Ethiopia during the last week. This was his fourth visit since October. During his visit, Mr. Lake met with Organization of African Unity (OAU) Secretary Salim Ahmed Salim, Eriteran President Isaias Afworki, and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

In their meetings with Mr. Lake, the leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia reaffirmed their engagement with the OAU's peace process, which the United States strongly supports. In this context, the United States urges both parties to accept the OAU's Framework Agreement and its agreed implementation in order to achieve a peaceful resolution of the dispute. Ethiopia has accepted the OAU Framework, and Eritrea awaits certain clarifications from the OAU.

The United States remains deeply concerned, however, about the continuing military build-up along the common border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and about the implications of this build-up for renewed hostilities. We call on both parties to exercise reason and restraint and to maintain their commitment to the peaceful solution that we are convinced is within reach.

Ethiopia and Eritrea have made remarkable strides in the last few years in overcoming a past of repression, famine, and war. Both nations have promising futures. Both are good friends of the United States. We ask them not to risk what they have gained in a conflict that cannot possibly benefit the people of either side. We pledge our own best efforts, in partnership with Ethiopia and Eritrea, to avert a tragedy and to advance the interest that continue to unite the people of both nations.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 17

The President met with his lawyers to discuss the Senate impeachment trial.

January 19

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by the severe storms, tornadoes, and high winds on January 17 and continuing.

January 20

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Buffalo, NY, and in the afternoon, they traveled to Norristown, PA. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

January 21

In an evening ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Yvonne A-Baki of Ecuador, Anton Buteiko of Ukraine, Hassaballah Abdelhadi Ahmat Soubiane of Chad, Ceslav Ciobanu of Moldova, Thomas Ndikumana of Burundi, Zina Andrianarivelo-Razafy of Madagascar, Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo of the Holy See, and Yuri Viktorovich Ushakov of Russia.