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Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald Bandler continued to provide diplomatic support to the United Nations-sponsored proximity talks in July and early August in Geneva and again in September in New York. The United Nations reports that this process has taken a "qualitative step forward" and was scheduled to resume in Geneva on November 1.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Statement on Signing the Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000

November 7, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1586, the "Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000." This Act is critical to the economic viability of individually owned Indian lands and the success of the Department of the Interior's ongoing efforts to implement the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994. It will help reduce the administrative and financial burden arising from the fractionated ownership of Indian lands.

The Act puts provisions in place for probate reform and establishing uniform rules for the descent and distribution of interests in allotted lands. It also contains provisions for the consolidation of fractional interests, as well as preventing lands from being taken out of trust when inherited by non-Indians. In addition, it will enhance opportunities for economic development by specifying the minimum percentage of owners of fractional interests that must consent to leasing agreements. Finally, it extends the Secretary's authority to acquire fractional interests, of 2 percent or less, for tribal consolidation, through the pilot project that my Administration and the Congress initiated in 1999. Since many Native Americans die without wills, it also authorizes estate planning assistance.

The Act results from our close consultation and collaboration with the Congress, the tribes, and the Indian landowners that began in 1994 and has been one of my Administration's top priorities in Indian trust fund management reform. Today's action will help bring Indian land ownership, management, and development into the 21st century.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1586, approved November 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106–462.

Proclamation 7371—National Adoption Month, 2000

November 7, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Families are the cornerstone of our Nation. Yet, today, tens of thousands of America's children are living within our child welfare system, without the sustained love and care of permanent families. For many of these children, often shuttled from one living situation to another, adoption opens the door to loving parents and permanent homes, where they can put down roots and learn what it means to be part of a safe, stable family. Adoption gives children who have been orphaned, abandoned, or abused a precious second chance at happiness; a chance to love and be loved and to reach their full potential in a secure, supportive environment.

While foster care offers children a safe temporary haven, adoption allows children to have the permanent homes they deserve. That is why increasing the chances of adoption for children in the foster care system has been one of my Administration's chief goals. Over the last 8 years, we have worked with the Congress to craft legislation that makes it easier, faster, and more affordable for parents to adopt children. Adoptive parents—like all new parents—can now take time off to care for their newly adopted children without fear of losing their jobs. We