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The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all coming. For those of you who have got some influence up on Capitol Hill, remind them, it works. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Woodson, Sr., founder and president, National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise; and John Henry Gregory, founder and chief executive officer, The Enrichment Association of Community Healing (TEACH).

Proclamation 7639—National Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2003

January 14, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation was built on a promise of life and liberty for all citizens. Guided by a deep respect for human dignity, our Founding Fathers worked to secure these rights for future generations, and today we continue to seek to fulfill their promise in our laws and our society. On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we reaffirm the value of human life and renew our dedication to ensuring that every American has access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

As we seek to improve quality of life, overcome illness, and promote vital medical research, my Administration will continue to honor our country's founding ideals of equal dignity and equal rights for every American. Every child is a priority and a blessing, and I believe that all should be welcomed in life and protected by law. My Administration has championed compassionate alternatives to abortion, such as helping women in crisis through maternity group homes, encouraging adoption, promoting abstinence education, and passing laws requiring parental notification and waiting periods for minors.

The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, which I signed into law in August 2002, is an important contribution to our efforts to care for human life. This important legislation helps protect the most vulnerable members of our society by ensuring that every infant born alive, including one who survives abortion, is considered a person and receives protection under Federal law. It helps achieve the promises of the Declaration of Independence for all, including those without the voice and power to defend their own rights.

Through ethical policies and the compassion of Americans, we will continue to build a culture that respects life. Faith-based and community organizations and individual citizens play a critical role in strengthening our neighborhoods and bringing care and comfort to those in need. By helping fellow citizens, these groups recognize the dignity of every human being and the possibilities of every life; and their important efforts are helping to build a more just and generous Nation. By working together to protect the weak, the imperfect, and the unwanted, we affirm a culture of hope and help ensure a brighter future for all.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, 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 Sunday, January 19, 2003, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. As we reflect upon the sanctity of human life, I call upon all Americans to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies in our homes and places of worship, to rededicate ourselves to compassionate service, and to reaffirm our commitment to respecting the life and dignity of every human being.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 16, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 17.

Videotape Remarks to the African Growth and Opportunity Act Forum

January 15, 2003

Thank you very much. And thank you, Ambassador Zoellick, for leading the United States delegation to this historic gathering. And thanks to the other U.S. Government officials, including Sam Bodman, Andrew Natsios, and others, for attending this forum.

I also thank you all for the honor of addressing this important meeting. I'm disappointed I'm not able to join you in person. I still look forward to visiting Africa later this year. I'm grateful to Prime Minister Jugnauth for hosting this forum. And to all the ministers and delegates and guests from our fellow AGOA nations, I extend the good wishes of the American people.

All of us share a common vision for the future of Africa. We look to the day when prosperity for Africa is built through trade and markets. We see a continent at peace, where the people of Africa obtain education and medical care and live in freedom. And we're making great progress, as shown by last month's free elections in Kenya.

Yet fulfilling this vision is the work of many years. It will require hard effort and true leadership and a rejection of some old ways. And in this great work, you will always have a partner in the United States.

Every nation that seeks peace faces a common enemy today in global terror. The recent attacks in Mombasa remind us that Africa is on the frontlines of the war against terror. All our citizens know the awful price of terror, and we will not rest until we have defeated terrorism in all its forms.

In this struggle, my country is grateful for the crucial support and friendship we have received from the nations of Africa. You've stood with us against a deadly threat. And we will stand with you to help bring an end to the terrible regional conflicts that bring so much suffering to innocent Africans, from Congo to Sudan to the Ivory Coast.

Safety from violence is the most basic condition of better lives for the people of Africa. And now and in years to come, we will continue working to expand trade between America and the African Continent. AGOA shows the power of trade to lift people out of poverty. Exports from AGOA nations to the United States are rising dramatically, and the benefits are felt throughout the region. From Mauritius to Mali, AGOA is helping to reform old economies, creating new incentives for good governance and offering new hope for millions of Africans.

America is committed to building on the great success of AGOA. One important way we can do this is to give business the confidence to invest in Africa, knowing the law's benefits will continue long into the future. Therefore, I'm pleased to announce that I will ask the United States Congress to extend AGOA beyond 2008.

My administration strongly supported the AGOA II improvements, which are now helping African companies to sharply increase exports to the United States. As promised at the last AGOA meeting in Washington, the United States has opened offices in Botswana and Kenya and Ghana to ensure that African businesses can take advantage of new opportunities to sell goods abroad. Entrepreneurs in Africa often face difficulty complying with trade regulations and standards, and these offices are there to provide help. To assist African farmers in selling abroad, soon we will assign U.S. agricultural officials to each of these regional offices.

America is also working toward a free trade agreement with the Southern African Customs Union. Reaching that agreement involves complex and costly negotiations. To speed up those negotiations, my country will provide technical assistance to members of the Southern African Customs Union.

Wider trade is essential to economic growth, but our work does not end there. Many countries also need assistance to help spare their peoples from the extremes of poverty and disease. We are sending 1 million metric tons of food to help feed the 30 million people in southern Africa and the Horn facing starvation, and we are urging other nations to join us in meeting this urgent need.

The United States will also continue to lead the world in providing the resources to defeat HIV/AIDS. In addition, we have pledged to help poor countries get access to the emergency life-saving drugs they need to fight HIV/AIDS and other infectious epidemics. The AIDS pandemic has caused