

**REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT GORE
IN SUPPORT OF NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA
Tuesday, May 9, 2000**

Thank you, Secretary Albright. I also want to thank President Ford and President Carter for lending their voices to this critical cause.

And I would like to thank President Bush, who isn't here today, but who has been unequivocal on this issue.

When you look at all the leaders who are here today, it goes without saying that this is not a group that agrees on everything.

They have agreed to join us today for a simple reason: free and fair trade with China is essential – to American prosperity, to our national security, and to our ideals around the world.

The economic merits of Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China are beyond dispute. It means good jobs for American workers -- and 1.2 billion consumers for American products and services.

Of course, PNTR is about much more than American prosperity. It is crucial to the hard work of bringing freedom and reform to the Chinese people.

There are those who disagree with us on this issue. I respect their views – and I understand their impatience with the pace of change in China. We have to continue to press China on issues such as human rights, workers rights, religious freedom, and treatment of Tibet.

But I believe very deeply that by bringing China into the global economy – by making China live by the same global trading rules that other nations follow – we will strengthen the forces of reform within China.

We will create a powerful new pressure on China to establish the rule of law – which is the foundation not just of a free and open economy, but also of the kind of political reforms we are working to promote.

And expanding trade with China advances our vital security interests, by giving China a far greater stake in global peace and prosperity.

China's leaders understand that their nation can't continue to grow unless it strengthens its economic ties with the world. Bringing China into the world trading system makes it far more likely that China's leaders will find it in their interests to play a meaningful role in global stability.

For all these reasons, I strongly support Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. It's right for American jobs; it's right for the cause of reform in China; and I believe it will move us closer to the strong and stable world community we all seek to create.

Now I'm pleased to introduce someone who has taken enormous strides toward engagement – and toward the freer and more vibrant world we all seek. He has been a great economic steward for America – a great peacemaker – and a great defender of our national security.

Ladies and gentlemen, President William Jefferson Clinton...

**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION ON AIDS IN AFRICA
Monday, January 10, 2000**

Mr. Secretary General, Members of the Security Council, Distinguished Guests, and, in particular, Honored Delegates from the Nations of Africa:

"HIV/AIDS is not someone else's problem. It is my problem. It is your problem. By allowing it to spread, we face the danger that our youth will not reach adulthood. Their education will be wasted. The economy will shrink. There will be a large number of sick people whom the health will not be able to maintain."

Mr. Secretary and Members of the Council: These are not my words. They were not uttered in the United States or the United Nations. They were spoken by my friend, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, as he declared South Africa's Partnership Against AIDS more than a year ago. The same words should be spoken out not only in South Africa, not only in Africa, but all across the earth. In Africa, the scale of the crisis may be greater, the infrastructure weaker, and the people poorer, but the threat is real for every people and every nation, everywhere on earth. No border can keep AIDS out; it cuts across all the lines that divide us. We owe ourselves and each other the utmost commitment to act against AIDS on a global scale -- and especially where the scourge is greatest.

AIDS is a global aggressor that must be defeated.

As we enter the new millennium, Africa has crossed the first frontiers of momentous progress. Over the past decade, a rising wave of African nations has moved from dictatorship to democracy, embraced economic reform, opened markets, privatized enterprises, and stabilized currencies. More than half the nations of Africa now elect their own leaders -- nearly four times the number ten years ago -- and economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa has tripled, creating prospects for a higher quality of life across the continent.

Tragically, this progress is imperiled, just as it is taking hold, by the spread of AIDS which now grips 20 million Africans. Fourteen million have already died -- one quarter of them children. Each day in Africa, 11,000 more men, women, and children become HIV positive -- more than half of them under the age of 25.

For the nations of sub-Saharan Africa, AIDS is not just a humanitarian crisis. It is a security crisis -- because it threatens not just individual citizens, but the very institutions that define and defend the character of a society.

This disease weakens workforces and saps economic strength. AIDS strikes at teachers, and denies education to their students. It strikes at the military, and subverts the forces of order and peacekeeping.

The United States is profoundly moved by the toll AIDS takes in Africa. At the same

time, we know that our own country has not achieved as much as we should or must in our own battle against AIDS. I am pleased that our Surgeon General is here today; his recent report tells us that we have not overcome the ignorance and indifference that lead to infection. We must continue to study the success of others, while we seek to share our progress with them.

As Vice President, I have journeyed four times to sub-Saharan Africa. I have taken along top health officials, AIDS specialists, corporate leaders, and physicians. We have spent long hours with African leaders, heard their ideas, and discussed their difficulties with the fateful crisis of AIDS.

It is inspiring to see so many in Africa – not only leaders, but health care workers and community workers, mothers and fathers, and countless ordinary citizens – fighting to save the lives of the people they love. Ten years ago, Uganda was suffering the world's highest infection rates. Today – because the whole nation has mobilized to end stigma, urge prevention, and change behavior – Uganda is now recording dramatic drops in the infection rate. Uganda, which used to be proof of the problem, is now powerful proof that we can turn the tide against AIDS.

We know that the first line of defense against this disease is prevention. And prevention depends on breaking down the barriers against discussing the extent and risks of AIDS. That is one purpose of this historic Security Council meeting. Today, in sight of all the world, we are putting the AIDS crisis at the top of the world's security agenda. We must talk about AIDS not in whispers, in private meetings, in tones of secrecy and shame. We must face the threat as we are facing it right here, in one of the great forums of the earth – openly and boldly, with urgency and compassion. Until we end the stigma of AIDS, we will never end the disease of AIDS.

We also must do much more to provide basic care and treatment to the growing number of people who, thank God, are living, instead of dying, with HIV and AIDS. This requires affordable medicine, but also more than medicine; it requires that we train doctors, nurses, and home-care workers, that we develop clinics and community-based organizations to deliver care to those who need it. Today, fewer than 5 percent of those living with AIDS in Africa have access to even basic care. We know we can prolong life, reduce suffering, and allow mothers with AIDS to live longer with their children, if we offer treatment for opportunistic infections like tuberculosis and malaria.

Our ultimate goal, our best hope, is to prevent AIDS by vaccination, and we are committed to the maximum possible research. But we need to do more to harness the talent and power of the private sector. In September, in his speech to the General Assembly, President Clinton said it was wrong that only two percent of all biomedical research is directed to the major killer diseases in the developing world. He pledged America to a new effort to speed the development and delivery of vaccines for AIDS, malaria, TB, and other illnesses that disproportionately afflict the poorest nations.

This three-part strategy of prevention, treatment, and research is the right fight. And the United States has contributed more than a billion dollars to wage it worldwide – more than half

of that for sub-Saharan Africa. But we must do more.

Last year, I announced the largest-ever increase in the U.S. commitment to international AIDS programs -- \$100 million to fight AIDS in Africa, India, and other areas.

Today, I announce America's decision to step up the battle. The budget the Clinton-Gore Administration will send to our Congress next month will include an additional increase of \$100 million for a total of \$325 million to fund our worldwide fight against AIDS. This new funding will include efforts:

- To reduce the stigma and prevent the spread of AIDS;
- To reduce mother-to-child transmission;
- To support home and community based care for people with AIDS;
- To provide care for children orphaned by AIDS;
- And to strengthen health infrastructure to prevent and treat of AIDS.

I would also like to announce here this morning that the budget we will send to our Congress next month will include \$50 million for the United States' contribution to the Vaccine Fund of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations. This contribution -- in fulfillment of the promise President Clinton made to the General Assembly -- will help fund the research, purchase, and distribution of lifesaving vaccines in developing nations.

I am also announcing today an initiative for an expanded public-private partnership in the battle against AIDS. Indeed, in the coming months, I will convene a meeting of U.S. business leaders active in Africa, to develop a set of voluntary principles for corporate conduct to make the workplace an effective place for the education and prevention of AIDS. Let us also set this goal: through public and private efforts, in partnership with partner nations, we will attack the cycle of infection at one critical point -- its most heartbreaking point -- the moment of mother-to-child transmission.

In addition, I announce that our budget request for next year will -- for the first time ever -- offer specific funding for the U.S. military to work with the armed forces of other nations to combat AIDS. Inside our own country, our armed forces have acted effectively to prevent the spread of AIDS in the military. Secretary of Defense Cohen is ready to share our experience with our military counterparts in Africa.

We are also committed to helping poor countries gain access to affordable medicines, including those for HIV/AIDS. Last month, the President announced a new approach to ensure that we take public health crises into account when applying U.S. trade policy. We will cooperate with our trading partners to assure that U.S. trade policies do not hinder their efforts to

respond to health crises.

But to win the ongoing global battle against AIDS, we must also fight the poverty that speeds its spread. In June, in Cologne, we joined with our G-7 partners in the Cologne Debt Initiative, a landmark commitment to faster and deeper debt relief for the heavily-indebted poor countries.

We will continue to engage our G-7 partners to bring greater resources to this effort. Today I challenge the world's wealthier, healthier nations to match America's increasing commitment to a worldwide crusade against AIDS.

But more money is not enough. We must also make sure that more money has more impact. Next July, the global community will gather in Durban, South Africa for the 13th International AIDS Conference. There are many inspiring efforts to fight AIDS all around the world. Right now, they amount to many isolated efforts, not a single focused assault. We must knit together the separate initiatives by local, national, regional, and global organizations, to take maximum advantage of their synergy and success. We will work with the organizers of the Durban Conference to advance this essential objective. It is essential, because how we speed the money, and how effectively we target it, not just how much we spend, will determine how many lives we save.

AIDS is one of the most devastating threats ever to confront the world community. Many have called the battle against it a sacred crusade.

The United Nations was created to stop wars. Now, we must wage an win a great and peaceful war of our time – the war against AIDS. For all, here and around the world, willing to enlist in this cause, let us hear and heed and take heart from the words of an African poet, Mongane Wally Serote:

“remember
the passion of our hearts
the blinding ache and pain
when we heard the hysterical sobs
of our little children crying against fate

we heard these, we knew them, we absorbed them
but we surged forward
knowing that life is a promise, and that that promise is us...”

That promise is us. We here in this room – representing the billions of people of the world -- we must become the promise of hope and of change. We must become the promise of life itself. We have the knowledge, the compassion, and the means to make a difference. We must acknowledge our moral duty and accept our great and grave responsibility to succeed.

We must make the promise and keep the promise to prevail against this disease -- so that when the story of AIDS is told to future generations, it will be a tale not just of human tragedy but of human triumph. And the moral of that story will be the capacity of the human spirit to summon us in common cause, to defeat a common foe, and secure the health and hopes of so many of our fellow human beings.

May God bless all who have suffered from this disease. May God bless the united effort of our united nations to end it -- soon and forever.

**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL OPENING SESSION
Monday, January 10, 2000**

I call to order this first meeting of the United Nations Security Council in the 21st Century.

Let me thank the distinguished members of the Council for the honor of presiding, and for your willingness to greet the dawn of this new millennium by exploring a brand new definition of world security.

Today marks the first time, after more than 4,000 meetings stretching back more than half a century, that the Security Council will discuss a health issue as a security threat.

We tend to think of a threat to security in terms of war and peace. Yet no one can doubt that the havoc wreaked and the toll exacted by HIV/AIDS do threaten our security. The heart of the security agenda is protecting lives -- and we now know that the number of people who will die of AIDS in the first decade of the 21st Century will rival the number that died in all the wars in all the decades of the 20th Century.

When 10 people in sub-Saharan Africa are infected every minute; when 11 million children have already become orphans, and many must be raised by other children; when a single disease threatens everything from economic strength to peacekeeping -- we clearly face a security threat of the greatest magnitude.

This historic session not only recognizes the real and present danger to world security posed by the AIDS pandemic -- which I will discuss in further detail during my remarks as head of the U.S. delegation -- this meeting also begins a month-long focus by this Council on the special challenges confronting the continent of Africa. The powerful fact that we begin by concentrating on AIDS has a still larger significance: it sets a precedent for Security Council concern and action on a broader security agenda. By the power of example, this meeting demands of us that we see security through a new and wider prism, and forever after, think about it according to a new, more expansive definition.

For the past half century, the Security Council has dealt with the classic security agenda -- built upon common efforts to resist aggression, and to stop armed conflict. We have witnessed wars among nations, and violence on the scale of war within nations, for many reasons:

- Because of claims of religious or racial superiority.
- Because of lust for power, disguised as ideology or rationalized as geo-strategic doctrine.
- Because of a sense that a small place or a larger region -- or the whole world itself -- was

too small to allow for the survival and prosperity of all, unless the powerful could dominate the weak.

--Because of the tendency of too many to see themselves solely as separate groups, celebrating and defending their exclusivity, by demonizing and dehumanizing others.

--Because of poverty, which causes the collapse of hopes and expectations, the coming apart of a society, and makes people first desperate, then freshly open to evil leadership.

But while the old threats still face our global community, there are new things under the sun -- new forces arising that now or soon will challenge international order, raising issues of peace and war. As our world enters the year 2000, it is not the change in our calendar that matters. What matters is that in this symbolic transition from old to new, we find one of those precious few moments in all of human history when we have a chance to become the change we wish to see in the world -- by seeking a common agreement to openly recognize a powerful new truth that has been growing just beneath the surface of every human heart: it is time to change the nature of the way we live together on this planet. From this new vantage point, we must forge and follow a new agenda for world security, an agenda that includes:

--The global environmental challenge, which could render all our other progress meaningless, unless we deal with it successfully.

--The global challenge of defeating drugs and corruption, which now spill across our borders.

--The global challenge of terror -- magnified by the availability of new weapons of mass destruction so small they can be concealed in a coat pocket.

--The new pandemics, laying waste to whole societies, and the emergence of new strains of old diseases that are horrifyingly resistant to the anti-biotics that protected the last three generations.

Our new security agenda should be pursued with determination, adequate resources, and creative use of the new tools at the world's disposal that can be used to bring us together in successful common efforts -- tools such as the Internet and the emerging Global Information Infrastructure -- which, if used imaginatively, will enable new depths of insight and cooperation by nations, non-governmental organizations, and citizens at all levels.

Our task is not merely to recognize and confront these challenges, but to rise to our higher ideals, and work together to make our brightest dreams real in the lives of our children. In order to succeed, I believe, along with growing billions around this planet, that we must create a world where people's faith in their own capacity for self-governance unlocks their human potential, and justifies their growing belief that all can share in an ever-widening circle of human dignity and self-sufficiency. A world of freedom and free markets. A world where the free flow

of ideas and information, and freer access to education, sustain our more fundamental freedoms. A world in which parents are free to choose the size of their families with the confidence that the children they bring into this world will survive to become healthy adults, with economic opportunity in prosperous and peaceful communities. A world where we educate girls as well as boys, and secure the rights of women everywhere, as full members of the human family.

All this and more constitutes the great global challenge of our time: to create and strengthen a sense of solidarity, as we seek a newer world of security for all — security not only from loss of life and the ravages of war, but security from constant fear and degradation, and from a loss of the quality of life and liberty of spirit that should belong to all.

If we are to succeed in addressing this new security agenda, we must recognize that because of our rapid growth in population, and the historically unprecedented power of the new technologies at our widespread disposal, mistakes which once were tolerable can now have consequences that are multiplied many-fold.

For example, for almost all the years of recorded history, people could do whatever they wished to their environment, and do little to permanently harm it. People could wage war in the world, and do nothing to destroy it. But now, threats that were once local can have consequences that are regional or global; damage once temporary can now become chronic and catastrophic.

As a world community, we must prove to our citizens that we are wise enough to control what we have been smart enough to create. We must understand that the old conception of global security — with its focus almost solely on armies, ideologies, and geopolitics — has to be enlarged.

We need to show that we not only can contain aggression, prevent war, and mediate conflicts, but that we can work together to anticipate and respond to a new century with its new global imperatives.

The human mind -- our ingenuity, our dreaming, our restless quest to do better — created this moment. Now the human will — not of one individual, not of one nation or group of nations — but the collective will of truly united nations, must master this moment. We must bend it in the direction of life, not death; justice, not oppression; opportunity, not deprivation — a new security for the new world we now inhabit.

The future is not something that we merely try to predict. The future is something that we make. For ourselves. Together. It is up to us to move forward -- with faith in our principles, in our foresight, and in our common humanity. The Spanish poet Antonio Machado once said: "Pathwalker, there is no path, we create the path as we walk."

There is great hope in this pathmaking meeting. It is an honor to open it. And my hope is that the first days and years of the millennium — and all those that follow — will be guided by the vision that marks this first meeting. We live in a new time. We face new and larger

responsibilities. Meet them we can, and meet them we must – for the new threats to humanity are as grave as war itself – and the new hopes we have are as precious as peace.

Now I am pleased to present the distinguished Secretary General of the United Nations, who has given so much to the cause of peace and security, Kofi Annan.

CLOSING REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
GLOBAL FORUM ON FIGHTING CORRUPTION – CLOSING REMARKS
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1999

Let me thank you all once again for making the long journey here to the United States to help make a difference in the future of your countries and the future of our world. It takes an urgent issue to bring together high-level representatives from eighty-nine nations. We have traveled more than a million collective miles for two reasons: One – official corruption imposes a painful cost on the quality of our lives, and – two – we believe that if we come together to fight corruption, we can reduce its costs in our countries and communities.

On the costs of corruption, we have heard a great deal. If our presence here were not proof enough, our presentations have left no doubt: corruption accelerates crime, hurts investment, stalls growth, bleeds the national budget, and -- worst of all -- undermines our faith in freedom. Corruption is an enemy of democracy -- for democracy lives on trust, and corruption destroys our trust.

But the costs of corruption have not paralyzed us; they have energized us. We are here because we believe that by coming together, we can gain a firmer foothold in the fight against corruption. We all have seen and heard the success stories.

One of the striking stories I have heard comes from a police force in Colombia. The head of the force inherited a corrupt department. He began with survey work and background checks -- and then fired a large number of corrupt officers.

Then he vetted a special group of candidates for their ethical values, and enrolled those who passed the test into an elite force to deal with drug traffickers. The elite force is reasonably well paid, but no government salary can compete or compare with the bribes of a drug trafficker. It is the officers' values that keep them loyal. They regularly report back to the chief on the value of the bribe offers they reject.

Of course, the chief is wise enough to know that he cannot build an enduring new culture on the leadership of one person. So he has created an outside review board -- made up of the most prominent members of society -- to monitor the honesty and effectiveness of the force. He has admitted the force has a long way to go -- but it is perhaps not as long a way as they have already come.

Over the last three days, we have discussed many of the principles and themes that underlie this success and others.

First, to get honesty from our governments, we must first get honesty from our justice and security officials. As our conference special adviser Charlie Moskos has said: "You can't arrest crooked officials unless you first have honest cops."

We also know that -- to have honest cops -- we must pay them an honest wage. One nation -- unfortunately not unique -- is known to pay its police officers about half the wage of an average worker. No fight against corruption can succeed if it requires police officers to be moral heroes. It is simply unwise and unfair to force a mother or father to choose between doing their jobs honestly and raising their children comfortably.

Of course, we have also talked about what our first President George Washington called "that little spark of celestial fire called conscience." Conscience is essential to honest public service. We can set government salaries to meet need, but no government salary will ever satisfy greed. To withstand the astonishing sums offered by drug traffickers, a person needs a stout heart and a strong conscience, and that is why personnel in our justice and security positions need to be thoroughly vetted for their ethical values.

At the same time, I believe that our clergy could help our anti-corruption efforts immensely if they were to make their voices heard around the world through an inter-faith statement on fighting corruption. They serve as our public conscience, and I am convinced that their support would strengthen the hands of those who are fighting for more ethical governance.

We have also talked about the importance of government reinvention and reform, including fewer, clearer laws; more measurable results; disinterested economic decisionmaking; strong and independent judiciaries, and strong ethics and financial disclosure rules.

We have talked about the fact that as military forces move to non-traditional defense roles -- such as counter-drug efforts and border protection -- their vulnerability to corruption increases. We need to respond decisively with strong and clean leadership, appropriate training, and keen emphasis on the principles of military professionalism.

We have talked about the importance of openness and transparency -- and about the value of information. Indeed, I have heard from many who are convinced -- as I am -- that the number one force in our favor in the fight against corruption is our ever-expanding access to information.

But information alone is not enough. The core of accountability is the fusion of information and action -- action on the part of public officials, private citizens, businesses, and non-governmental organizations. The crucial role of NGOs is far too often overlooked -- but their importance is more than apparent to host governments. Any government who wants to throw a dark cloak over its activities immediately tries to tie the hands and bind the feet of its NGOs. NGOs are a core component of civil society, and they bear a great share of the 24-hour, watch-dog work of holding governments accountable.

All these themes represent international norms for fighting corruption. If we are committed to these norms, then governments should ratify and implement the international conventions that embody these norms -- such as the OECD and the OAS Conventions.

On this last point, I am delighted to announce that on the opening day of our conference, the Inter-American Development Bank and the OAS agreed to fund efforts to promote ratification and implementation of the OAS accord.

I would like also to recognize the fact that this Tuesday, ministers from 11 African nations here in Washington for this conference drafted a set of 25 principles on anti-corruption, good governance, and accountability. They are now taking these principles back to their governments for consideration.

As we seek to ratify and then implement these anti-corruption conventions, we should take advantage of known anti-corruption principles and effective practices. We have distributed here at the conference just such a set of guiding principles. They have been compiled, reviewed, written, and edited by a broad cross-section of experts. And they represent the first major effort to articulate a set of comprehensive, global principles for fighting official corruption.

We urge you to take these principles back home -- talk about them, test them, see if you can use them. They represent the basis for the anti-corruption principles I will present to President Clinton for discussion of the G-8 at the Köln summit this summer. We hope they will make a difference in the efforts of all nations eagerly undertaking any anti-corruption effort.

In addition to discussing general principles of fighting corruption, we were fortunate at the conference to hear about several new tools to help countries gather data, identify priorities, and apply the principles necessary to get a start in the fight against corruption.

As I announced on Wednesday, the United States plans to work closely with the World Bank, local organizations, civil society and other international donors and NGOs to support the use of diagnostic surveys. Countries who have adopted this approach have seen the dynamic impact of information: When overwhelming evidence of a problem is presented to the public in an open forum -- inaction by the government is no longer an option.

In the past three days we have also had enthusiastic discussions about the promise of mutual evaluations. In particular, I have been pleased to hear from those who are eager to pursue the Internet-based reporting device I proposed on Wednesday -- and from those who support the possibility of offering individual citizens and business people the opportunity to serve as evaluators.

I am immensely proud of the work of this conference. I am not alone in the view that such a conference could not have happened ten years ago. Ten years ago -- if the nations of the world had been able to overcome the implicit self-criticism to convene on the subject of corruption -- I am afraid there might have been so much discussion on the source of the problems, there would have been little time left for discussing solutions.

Very possibly, lines would have divided north from south, east from west, rich from poor. Countries might well have fought over who was worse: the bribemaker or bribetaker.

Much has changed in ten years. The feeling of good will we have built together has become almost a physical feature of this room. Our conversations have been marked by the kind of honesty that both expresses trust, and builds trust. It has transformed the depth of our dialogue.

Just one hour ago, the chief delegate from the Netherlands proposed that we follow this event with a second global forum – to be held in the Netherlands sometime in the next calendar year.

I second his proposal. On behalf of the United States, I thank the Netherlands for its initiative and hospitality and am honored to offer the services of the United States as co-sponsor.

The Korean delegation has proposed an annual global ministerial forum on fighting corruption. The heads of delegation have agreed to this idea and we hope to see it come to fruition.

Finally, one of our delegates from Kenya was so enthusiastic about the spirit and accomplishments of the conference, he implored us to sign a declaration expressing our common sense of urgency about the problem of corruption, and our commitment to continue the dialogue begun in this forum.

In closing, I would like to read to you a short, but poignant passage from a noted African novel -- The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born – by Ayi Kwei Armah. It is the story of an honest and idealistic young man, who goes against the grain, resists bribes, and is rewarded not with respect but with the scorn of his friends and colleagues.

During one scene, the protagonist, deep in thought, was finding it – in the words of the author “more and more difficult to justify his own honesty when the whole world said there were only two types of men who took refuge in honesty -- the cowards and the fools.”

That upright young man – in a story published 30 years ago -- was alone in his moral struggle. Today, he must have our help. More and more of us must be there with him, battling with him for the minds and hearts of the majority, working to change the culture and customs; to turn the corrupt into outcasts; to expose them as criminals who slice into the veins and arteries of the nation's economy, and slowly bleed it dry.

As we uncover the corruption, expose the crimes, and expel the criminals – our people will sense their own growing power to chase out corruption, and they will quicken their efforts. More and more people will see that official corruption is theft from the nation, and theft from the

nation is always theft from the weakest in the nation: the poor, the old, the disabled, the sick, the children, the new borns. It is for them that we gather here. It is for them that we take up this fight. It is for them that we pledge our common commitment to honest government.

As our beloved President Abraham Lincoln reminded us: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing." Let us not leave here today before we make an enduring personal pledge to this cause. For if we do not take the lead in cleaning up corruption, no one else will, because no one else can. Thank you. May God Bless you, and may God bless our efforts.

REMARKS PREPARED FOR VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
GLOBAL FORUM ON FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Keynote Address

Wednesday, February 24, 1999

Once in a rare while, the cycles of time present us with what historians call an open moment -- when some combination of luck and circumstance allow us the chance to choose a better future. We are in such a moment. We have the chance now to draw on our oldest ethical values, our strongest democratic principles, and our newest tools and technologies, to do a better job than any people before us in creating a world that is not just better off, but better -- for all who inhabit the earth.

In the Old Testament, Moses teaches the people of Israel: "Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous."

Some thousand years later, Confucius found in China a corrupt government, and began to set the high moral standards he believed would make for a more harmonious society.

Some thousand years after that, the Koran says: "O my people! Give full measure and full weight in justice ... And do not evil in the earth, causing corruption."

Corruption is an old affliction, and no corruption is more damaging than the corruption that is the focus of this conference: corruption among justice and security officials, those pledged to uphold the law. In the information age, the speed of information, the movement of capital, the increase of trade have all magnified the potential impact of official corruption.

Official corruption can speed environmental destruction, accelerate the drug trade, even encourage the smuggling of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons materials. Economically, corruption represents an arbitrary, exorbitant tax. It can lead to wasteful government spending, bigger deficits, greater income inequality, and a crisis of confidence that can spark capital flight, crash the economy, destabilize governments, and put people half way around the world out of work.

While the debate can rage all night about the precise role of corruption in the global financial crisis, there can be no serious doubt that the crisis has been aggravated by corruption. And now -- in spite of the general prosperity of the U.S. economy, some American sectors are hurting a great deal from that crisis. Of course, at the epicenter of the financial crisis, it is far worse -- millions of Asian families feel they have lost their financial future.

The point is -- corruption in one country can make its impact felt around the world. No country can seal itself off from the impact of corruption beyond its borders, and therefore every nation must work with every other nation to fight corruption wherever it is in the world.

At the same time, to work well together, we must all acknowledge a central truth: No nation has a monopoly on virtue. None has a corner on corruption. And no nation has the right to lecture any other.

Just this month, 3 U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service employees, charged with patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border near Nogales, were arrested for their involvement in a scheme to smuggle illegal drugs into the U.S. The alleged role was simple – looking the other way. The alleged crime was vile – betraying the trust of their country, and selling out the millions of young people we seek to protect.

The large amount of illegal drugs that pass through the 300 ports of entry into the United States -- combined with the enormous amount of money drug traffickers will spend trying to corrupt U.S. officials -- can put enormous pressure on the professionalism of officers from the DEA, INS, Customs, and Treasury. We are attentive to it. We are addressing it. But let's be clear: The stakes are too high -- the lives of our children too precious -- to waste time posturing about it. We in the United States must have a serious, rigorous discussion of every possible avenue for guarding against corruption -- both here and abroad. And I want to welcome each and every one of you to the United States, and thank you for coming to this conference to join us in this critical three-day conversation on fighting corruption.

A sample of any week's newspapers, TV, and magazines might suggest corruption is on the rise. We read and hear everywhere about its infestation in former empires and its choke hold on young democracies. Today, the reach of corruption seems longer; its power to shake the world seems greater. And yet, there is hope. Hope in the successful approaches of the past. And even greater hope in the early and growing successes of today. There is an important reason why -- at a time of apparent rise in global corruption -- that corruption may be suddenly and surprisingly more vulnerable than before. Cynics no doubt will mock any optimism in the fight against corruption. But let me remind you of the words of George Bernard Shaw: "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man."

Let me review for you today the forces that can assist our fight against corruption, and suggest to you that we have a secret weapon that is unique to our time in history, and could turn the fight in our favor.

First, the world's tolerance for corruption is fading fast. Gone are the days when corruption was written off merely as a cost of doing business. Today, in more and more parts of the world, corruption is seen as it should be seen: as serious crime with devastating consequences

-- as a cold, vicious, often violent sacrifice of citizen security, for a narrow, greedy, private, personal profit on the part of a crooked official.

As evidence of the rising interest in fighting corruption, let me explain that we initially expected to have representatives from about 40 countries at this conference. In fact, we have representatives from eighty-nine. Some nations were so eager to come they even cautioned us that our bilateral relations would suffer if they were not invited. And so we are here, squeezed to the walls, because of the rising intolerance of corruption, and the rising sense that it is time to take action against it. Victor Hugo once wrote: "An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come." Fighting corruption is an idea whose time has come.

A second important force in our favor is leadership. We are blessed to have in the world today -- and many are in this room right now -- very prominent leaders who have placed the fight against corruption at the heart of their public mission. There is no substitute for leadership by example -- especially on the issue of official corruption.

The 13th-century Persian poet Saadi told this story to illustrate the importance of leadership. A King was moving with his army through the land when he came upon some beautiful apple trees. The King asked for an apple, ate it, and suddenly noticed his top general had gone to pay the owner the price of the apple.

When the General returned, the King challenged him: "Why did you pay the man? He must have been flattered to have a King take a piece of his fruit."

"Your Majesty," his General explained. "If you had taken even one apple, your army would have taken the whole orchard."

People are guided by the behavior of the men and women they look to for leadership.

A third force in our favor in our fight against corruption is the growing trend toward government reform -- or reinventing government. Just five weeks ago I hosted right here at the State Department an international conference on Reinventing Government -- the effort to institute reforms that can help government work better and cost less. There is one especially striking parallel between that conference and this one -- namely: in many cases, the very steps you would take to reform government to reduce corruption are the same steps you would take to reform government to increase efficiency.

As an example, confusing regulations can foster corruption. Adopting fewer, clearer regulations would help reduce corruption. That is also a principle of reinventing government.

Monopoly power can foster corruption. Diluting monopoly by privatizing some functions would help reduce corruption. That is also a principle of reinventing government.

Lack of accountability can foster corruption. Increasing accountability by focusing on measurable results would help reduce corruption. That is also a principle of reinventing government.

The point here is one often made by students and scholars of international corruption, namely: the fight against corruption is not separate from the process of government reform. They are both efforts to make sure self-government works for its citizens.

A fourth factor in our favor in the fight against corruption is ethical behavior. Robert Klitgaard, Dean of The Rand Graduate School in Santa Monica California, has developed a formula to gauge the likelihood of corruption. He describes it: $C = M + D - A$ or "corruption equals monopoly plus discretion minus accountability." If you have a monopoly, and you have discretion in applying the rules, and no one is holding you accountable, you are far likelier to become corrupt.

I think that is a very insightful analysis, particularly if the formula takes into account what I would call the "inner accountability" of conscience. I believe conscience is innate, universal, and one of the most important tools in the fight against corruption.

Chilean poet Pablo Neruda talked of "the most ancient rites of our conscience." The poet Dante once wrote: "A light is given you to know good and evil." Immanuel Kant once wrote: "Conscience is not a thing to be acquired... but every man, as a moral being, has it originally within him."

More recently, Harvard Professor Jerome Kagan published a book contending that there is a universal desire to see oneself as ethically upright. This desire explains the power of conscience. If we wish to see ourselves as ethically upright, we will avoid situations where we could be seen doing wrong.

This explains not only the power of our private conscience, but also the power of our

public conscience -- our clergy. Our Priests, Ministers, Monks, Nuns, Mullahs -- who represent God in society. They are the public voice of conscience. They command enormous respect throughout society. They have immense power to tilt the scales toward good in public life. I look forward to their work here at the conference, and to having their ongoing participation in society's efforts to root out corruption.

If we accept that people, driven by conscience, really do prefer to be clean and honest, we can see the wisdom in reinventing government and reforming systems to make it easier for people to make the right ethical choices. And it would itself be ethical to do so. After all, the last line in the most famous prayer in the Christian world begins with the words: "And lead us not into temptation." A system that reduces temptation and engages conscience will reduce corruption.

The fifth factor in our favor as we fight against corruption may be decisive. Some months ago, I spoke of people whose countries were in economic crisis, raising calls for democracy and reform. But today, in the information age, reform is not enough unless it matched with an effort to inform. First inform; then reform. Then, information may be decisive, because information is the natural enemy of corruption. Corruption thrives on ignorance, not information. It needs secrecy, not transparency. It seeks darkness, not light.

It has always been a legendary trait of organized crime that members of the syndicate would not talk; because talk would kill them. It is the same today with corruption. The free flow of information is the very thing corruption cannot abide, and yet the free flow of information is the signature trait of the age in which we live:

There have never been more channels of information, more sources of information, more storehouses of information. Information has never moved more quickly, to more people, with more purpose. Information has never been more prized, more purchased, or more essential to the wealth and success of society. It is the central medium of exchange.

At a time when society's central industry is the effort to satisfy people's need to know -- it bodes ill for corruption that it lives off the need that no one know -- that no one talk; and no one take action.

In fact, the recent examples of successful efforts against corruption come from the power of information, and the action of civil society.

In Argentina recently, newspapers reported huge discrepancies in public school lunch

costs between the capital of Buenos Aires and a more rural school district. Within two weeks, there were personnel changes in Buenos Aires and lunch costs dropped by half. If we inform civil society, civil society will reform the system.

Through a process called third-party procurement monitoring that brings openness, transparency and information to the process, a private firm has helped the Ministry of Health of Guatemala reduce its corruption, gain savings of 43%, and lower the price of its medicine by an average of 20 percent. The same approach has shown results in countries as diverse as Kenya, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Colombia.

In several countries from Latin America to Eastern Europe and to the former Soviet Union, the World Bank -- in collaboration with local institutions and civil society and international NGOs such as Transparency International -- has collaborated with local Governments to administer deeply detailed surveys on corruption to citizens, companies, and public officials in willing countries. Survey results typically reveal that public officials are highly cooperative survey respondents. They are very candid. They say they are themselves sick and tired of the corruption in their midst, and they are prepared to join coalitions to address the problem.

Businesses -- far from accepting corruption as a cost of business -- say they would pay 15 - 20 % more in taxes just to be free of the costs and hassles of corruption. As an example of the depth of corruption exposed by these diagnostic surveys, respondents from one country say it takes an average bribe of one thousand dollars to get a phone line. In another country, 60% of the customs officials surveyed say they purchased their positions. You know that if they pay for their position, they will make their position pay off.

Following this in-depth diagnostic survey approach, all this data is released in a major public meeting in the country, with the media present. Leaders from government, business, and civil society then come to consensus on an action plan targeting the worst areas of corruption.

In Bolivia, Vice President Quiroga -- after receiving and reviewing the survey results on official corruption in his country -- delivered a PowerPoint presentation before a national television audience identifying his 20 priorities over the next twelve months, and promised to follow up with further diagnostic survey work to monitor progress. This is just a beginning, of course. But it is an auspicious beginning.

In Albania, the then Prime Minister was presiding at a diagnostic survey workshop last summer. He said "we can sit here past midnight and argue about a particular number or claim

that a point has been overstated. That would be a waste. We have the data. We know what needs to be done. Let's begin." The next day, all the nation's newspapers carried Page One coverage of the results, with charts, graphs, and texts of survey results. Pushed off the front page that day -- amazingly -- was coverage of the prior day's crucial World Cup Soccer match between Albania's neighbors Romania and Croatia. People were more eager to see the survey information.

As a result of the excellent early results of this approach, and its success in engaging the energy of civil society, public officials, business people and individual citizens, I am pleased to announce today that the United States plans to work closely with the World Bank, local organizations, civil society and other international donors and NGOs to support willing countries in the use of these diagnostic surveys. When a country shows it is committed to the rigorous self-analysis necessary to launch a process of reform, we would be honored to work with its civil society, companies, public officials, and citizens to assist and encourage those efforts.

Of course, this initiative will be part of our administration-wide effort to mount a comprehensive, global response to the problem of corruption. Over the next two years we in the U.S. will work diligently with our friends and partners to (1) urge other key exporting nations to ratify and implement the OECD Convention; (2) to develop and implement global standards on transparency and accountability; (3) to conclude an Agreement on Transparency in Government Procurement at the WTO ministerial in Seattle later this year; and (4) to pursue region-wide anti-corruption initiatives in the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Europe -- including urging ratification in the United States Senate of the Inter-American Convention and seeking full implementation by all signatories.

We also look forward to working with all of you to maximize the advantages offered by what is called "mutual evaluation"-- an approach where different countries conduct on-site mutual evaluations to heighten the accountability and rigor attached to anti-corruption conventions.

I would suggest, to build on the effectiveness of the mutual evaluations, that we discuss during this conference ways to supplement the mutual evaluation process with an Internet-based reporting device. In addition, the mutual evaluation teams might consider offering individual citizens and business people of the host country the opportunity to serve as evaluators. That would increase interest and awareness of the evaluation efforts and help contribute to their success.

The information age -- with its advances in science and technology, new medical

discoveries, mobile capital, expanded trade, and instantaneous communication -- offers great opportunities coupled with great risks -- and thus brings us to the open moment I mentioned earlier. We have a rare chance to use the tools of our newest technology in the service of our oldest values -- helping us build faith in democracy, improve competitiveness, expand prosperity, expose corruption, and strengthen the system of self-government that is history's greatest guardian of freedom, equality, opportunity and human dignity.

If we do not fight for these values, the information age will simply create more efficient channels for the spread of mischief, mayhem and corruption. Make no mistake; this is a fight for our values. We know that as bribery rises, civil liberties fall. We know that as bribery rises, the rule of law falls. We know that as bribery rises, the professionalism of our civil service falls. We are not engaged in an academic debate. We are locked in a battle over the kind of world we will leave our children.

Together, for the sake of a greater global community, let us set new standards of humanity and new heights of prosperity -- by matching wisdom with intelligence, humanity with humor, compassion with common sense, and realism with idealism -- by instituting the open, honest, transparent, democratic systems that will help make public servants accountable for the best and most honest use of public money, and urge them to earn and safeguard every citizen's deposit of public trust. Thank you.

**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
OPENING SESSION OF INTERNATIONAL REGO CONFERENCE
Thursday, January 14, 1999**

We are here at this extraordinary international gathering, the very first of its kind, to talk about a subject that lies at the very heart of economic growth and productivity -- and even basic political legitimacy -- for the 21st Century: reforming and reinventing government so that it is smaller, smarter, and more responsive to change in this fast-changing Information Age.

Just a handful of years ago, it would have been impossible to hold this conference. Government reform was considered purely a domestic, internal topic -- that is, when it happened at all. And back when our economies were defined by our political borders, it was far less of an economic imperative. After all, if our businesses had to battle a bloated bureaucracy, ever-rising taxes, and overregulation, at least all of their competitors had the same disadvantage.

Today, so many forward-thinking nations have realized that they cannot make the most of the Information Age with the creaking governmental machinery of the Industrial Age. We cannot compete and thrive in the global marketplace if we are battling bureaucracy and apathy on our own shores. And we certainly cannot earn and sustain the faith of our people if we do not show them that self-government can work for them -- that they can reap its benefits, and become full partners in its progress.

Reinvention and reform is not a way to scale back our ambitions, or tighten our belts for its own sake -- as if sacrifice were a first principle.

It is, in fact, a recognition of this fundamental truth: that we cannot chase our highest ideals unless they are grounded in workable, practical, responsible self-governance.

We need governments that are as flexible, as dynamic, as focussed on serving their customers as the best private companies around the world. We need to adopt the very best management techniques from the private sector to create governments that are fully prepared for the Information Age.

In this fast-moving, fast-changing global economy -- when the free flow of dollars and data sustains economic and political strength, and whole new industries are born every day -- governments must be lean, nimble, and creative, or they will surely be left behind.

Then there is the basic freedom that underlies free markets everywhere. When governments work for the people -- when citizens receive good basic services, and have faith in the government that is providing them -- when taxes are low, and government meets public needs without maddening bureaucracy -- then a large measure of political and economic stability naturally follows. Let this be a first principle of 21st Century government: economic prosperity demands political legitimacy.

I am exhilarated by the vision and passion for change in this room. I know the great sacrifices many of you have made to remake your governments. I want us to stand together, and forge a new global coalition for smaller, smarter governance. Over the next two days -- and at a parallel conference I am convening in February, on ways to fight international corruption and cronyism -- let us learn from one another, and make just, responsive, and responsible government a pillar of global strength and community.

We all know that there is no cookie-cutter model for reinvention. Nations have found different paths to reform -- and for vastly different reasons. For many, the catalyst was economic crisis or calamity: crippling deficits, rising taxes, declining living standards, or international defaults.

That is why the first generation of reform in many nations focussed on macro-economic reforms and privatization of state-owned assets.

In the United States, we faced an economic crisis of a different sort -- characterized by chronic large deficits. But we also faced a crisis of confidence from our citizens, and anger over government's rising cost and declining effectiveness.

In Europe, every government faced public sector restrictions imposed by the Maastricht Treaty, as well as the emerging demands of economic integration and the European Union.

In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the challenge was not to reinvent democratic self-government, but to invent it in the first place.

In South Africa, the historic challenge was to move beyond the evils and unfairness of the Apartheid era.

In Latin America, now that important progress has been made in economic reform and privatization, "la segunda generacion" of reform is underway -- focussed on building responsive, effective governments that earn people's trust and faith.

In all these regions of our world, we have seen some remarkably successful reforms: from New Zealand's performance-based management, to Australia's new focus on outcomes and results; from the greater transparency of nations like Hungary and Poland, to England's focus on what we call "customer service" -- service to the citizen.

When President Clinton and I began what we call Reinventing Government, or REGO, we borrowed a great deal from other nations -- such as the establishment of government-wide financial standards -- personally recommended to me by New Zealand's Treasury Secretary, Graham Scott.

The question we should consider over the next two days is whether these different roads do indeed lead to the same destination: whether we can determine both the basic purposes of reinvention and reform around the world, and the basic tools and institutions we must strengthen to fulfill them.

We know that many of us have faced, in varying stages, a singular cultural challenge: Industrial Age bureaucracies that have grown far beyond the professional classes they were envisioned to be, and at times seem to specialize in immobility and apathy, lacking the leadership and also the freedom to change with the changing times.

This is not a new problem. Back in the days of Spanish rule in Latin America, when the viceroys were given commands by their King that they could not possibly fulfill, they answered with a phrase that still resonates through many bureaucracies today: "Obedezco pero no complio" -- "I obey, but I do not comply."

In fact, we find that this sentiment is universal. In Turkey, there is a phrase that means: "I will obey the rules -- regardless of what they cause."

In Germany, government workers used to use the phrase: "I will see what lets itself be done."

Of course, here in the United States, a common phrase used to be: "good enough for government work." We're working to change that.

Clearly, all of us face the challenge of changing this culture, and leading and empowering employees to make the innovations we need. What, then, are the common imperatives as we seek to create that change? I believe there are four:

First, economic competitiveness. We all share a concern that government lay the foundation for economic prosperity, instead of being a drag on it -- which means cutting deficits and wasteful spending. We all share an interest in the transparency of government operations -- so that global investors have confidence in us, and are less prone to the rapid withdrawals of capital that we saw throughout Asia in the past year and a half.

Some of you may be familiar with the term "red tape" -- the ever-expanding rules and regulations that governments seem to love -- and citizens hate. In a global economy where capital can be invested anywhere, red tape is like an economic noose that says: if you send your investments here, we're going to strangle them with bureaucracy, inefficiency, and forms, fees, and requirements you can barely even understand. That's why so many of us are working on common-sense regulatory reform.

Korea is abolishing almost half its regulations. In the United States, we forced agencies to cut 16,000 pages of needless regulation, and 640,000 pages of internal rules. This is good for the people, too; those rules and regulations make government services slower and more expensive. In Costa Rica, decrees to eliminate barriers to entry in the pharmaceutical industry led to reductions in the price of life-saving drugs and medicine -- 11 percent in only 4 months!

Second, doing more with less. In the 70's and 80's, we saw a growing international frustration with rising tax rates -- and the fact that they were paying not for better services, but for more bureaucracy and inefficiency. The stagflation of that time -- with slower growth and high inflation eating away at family incomes -- made rising tax rates even more of a burden. In America, we found that only through reinvention -- which saved us \$137 billion -- could we cut taxes, balance the budget, and improve services all at the same time.

It's happening around the world: the Canadian Programme Review turned a budget deficit into a balanced budget, and cut the federal workforce by 25 percent. For ten years now, Chile has run surpluses and reduced its government payroll.

Third, building people's faith in government. It wasn't only budget deficits that were trapping our governments in the past. Many of us faced performance deficits as well -- a legitimate feeling that government wasn't doing what it said it was going to do. With so little faith in self-government at home, it is harder to build the faith of the world community that vibrant free markets and the free flow of capital and ideas will be sustained.

That's why, in the United States, we started treating our citizens as "customers" -- the way the best private businesses treat their customers. Great Britain pioneered this notion of service to the citizen in the late 1980's. The Danish actually set maximum response times when citizens need help. The French define their goals as putting "the citizen in the core of public service" -- for instance, they now can deliver passports in less than one hour!

Building faith also demands that we bring government closer to the people. Some countries refer to the principle of "subsidiarity;" other countries speak of decentralization or devolution. But the concept is the same: empower governments not in some distant national capital, but in the places where people live and work, so it can be more responsive to their needs. Countries as diverse as India, Mexico, Pakistan, Poland, and Thailand now talk about decentralization and the need to build local government as more power moves toward the people.

Fourth and finally, strengthening community and civil society. In this way, reinvention and reform are about something far grander than the gears of government, or even the smooth workings of democracy. David Osborne, author of the landmark book "Reinventing Government," talked about the need to "steer, not row." A government that tries to fulfill every function itself -- a government that tries to be an omnipresent welfare state -- will only leave its people in a catatonic state. Smaller, more empowering government unleashes the energy of ordinary families and communities. That's what President Clinton and I tried to do with welfare

reform -- setting national standards for moving people from welfare to work, but then letting states and local communities shape the reforms that work best for them.

This kind of empowering government -- government that sets goals, and provides the tools to reach them -- leaves a vital role for communities, churches, civic institutions, families: the kind of vibrant civic life that is the very ideal of self-government. It's happening everywhere: the representative from Ghana wrote to us about the importance of civil society to the reform process. Mongolia is shifting more governmental functions to its non-governmental organizations. This is far from an abdication of responsibility -- it is really a call to responsibility, from all quarters.

If we accept that these are our common purposes -- competitiveness, building faith, doing more with less, and strengthening civil society -- and I hope this is a subject we can debate at this conference -- then it is worth considering: does it take more than mere government reforms to achieve them? I believe it does.

The fact that we can even gather here may be because we have come to a new point in history. No longer do nations divide themselves along the stark ideological divides of the old Cold War. Instead, more and more nations are committed to the common vision of democracy and free-market economies.

At the heart of these concepts one finds a set of institutions that allow people of different beliefs to peacefully resolve their differences. Democracy and market capitalism cannot thrive in societies that do not enjoy freedom of the press; an honest and impartial judiciary; an ability to check executive and legislative power; and a steadily expanding circle of dignity among different races and ethnic groups, women and men, different religious faiths.

These institutions are often frustrating and inefficient. But democracy and free markets work when we allow for the resolution of conflict. Too many nations are still lacking those basic institutions -- and for them conflict is bloody and brutal. But for those of us engaged in administrative and institutional reform, these underpinnings of democratic society are cherished. I believe they are the basis of any serious reform effort.

Let me talk just briefly about America's own experience, and the factors that drove President Clinton and me to undertake REGO six years ago. As I mentioned, when we campaigned in 1992, we saw a growing pressure for reform at the grassroots -- frustration with high taxes, and a feeling by many that they were not getting their money's worth. Crime and welfare were rising, the deficit was exploding, and we had fallen into a deep recession. There was a crisis of faith -- not just in government, but in our ability to solve our common problems.

In the 1960's, when you asked Americans if they trusted the federal government to do the right thing, 77 percent regularly said yes. By the time President Clinton and I ran for office, the percentage of Americans saying that they trusted the federal government had fallen to 17 percent.

With so many great unmet needs, many believed we had only two choices: tax and spend, which our people couldn't afford -- and cut and run, which our people wisely rejected. Instead, we found a new way: marrying responsible governance to our progressive ideals by balancing the budget and reinventing government, so we could invest and grow for the future.

I'll talk more about our experience with REGO in our first plenary session. But today, as we rededicate ourselves to reinvention and reform around the world, I have the honor of making three important new announcements about our efforts to reinvent government here in the United States.

If we want our government to be accountable for every taxpayer's dime, then we need a workforce that will be held accountable for real results. That is why we want to submit to Congress new civil service reform legislation, to significantly change the way many federal workers are hired, rewarded, and paid. Our civil service reform will be based on an insight that is common in private industry: you pay for performance. Instead of providing automatic pay increases based on seniority, managers in the federal government would have a significant portion of their pay determined by how well they do their jobs, and meet the people's needs. This won't cost taxpayers an extra penny, but it will ensure that today's tax dollars are far better spent. We plan to start working with our agencies and our employees' representatives to craft this proposal right away.

Of course, to truly change our culture, we must combine this legislation with the right kind of partnerships between labor and management. Partnerships which recognize the interests of both sides, but unite both front-line workers and managers in the common cause of improving government performance.

Next, we must do even more to focus on results, not red tape and regulation. This year's budget will contain a major new initiative with a simple premise: the needs of our children first, the needs of bureaucracy last. Recently, through REGO, we began to collect statistics on children's health -- immunization rates, the absence of teen pregnancy, child nutrition. Now we will start a pilot partnership with ten cities or states that will commit to specific improvements in these areas. In return for their commitment to focus on results, we will give them unprecedented new flexibility in how they use federal funds to achieve the results they want. This new initiative, called Results for our Children, will make a profound difference in hundreds of thousands of young lives.

Finally, you cannot improve customer service unless you truly listen to the customer. This year, we will conduct the first-ever government-wide Customer Satisfaction Survey -- to assess the progress we have made in the last five years. We have already established over 4,000 customer service standards, all published on our agencies' web sites. Now we need to determine, from the people's perspective, how we are doing, and how we can do better.

My hope is that this conference will be the start of a new international coalition for competitiveness -- one that seizes on our shared reforms to build governments that are as smart, as effective, and as dynamic as today's global economy and Information Age. That has been the heart of REGO in the United States -- and I know we have a lot to learn from all of you.

As all of us know, this is hard, unglamorous work. But as much as REGO is about the nuts and bolts of government, it is also about the soul and spirit of self-government. By meeting this challenge together, we can create more than effective government agencies -- we can create a global economic community that is strong and vibrant and equipped for the challenges of change. We can create a new trust and faith in our people, and in each other. That is the spirit in which I hope we will work these next two days, and in the years to come. Thank you.