Letter to Congressional Leaders on Iraq

August 3, 1995

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1), and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

Since its recognition of Kuwait last November, Iraq has done little to comply with its numerous remaining obligations under Council resolutions. At the most recent review of Iraq sanctions on July 11, 1995, the Security Council unanimously decided to maintain the sanctions regime on Iraq without change. We shall continue to insist that the sanctions be maintained until Iraq complies with all relevant provisions of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Iraq remains out of compliance with its obligations regarding weapons of mass destruction (WMD), according to recent reports from the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM). Iraq's recent admission that it had an offensive biological weapons program has received much attention. This admission should come as no surprise, the evidence of this program having been known for some time. Now we must see if Iraq discloses the details of this program, as required. If history is any indicator, we can expect Iraq to conceal information about details of the program until confronted with irrefutable evidence by UNSCOM.

The Iraqi regime recently said it would not be forthcoming on its biological weapons program until UNSCOM ''closed the file'' in the missile and chemical weapons areas. This type of quid pro quo is unacceptable. The Council's resolutions are unconditional. Iraq cannot trade compliance in one for a ''clean slate'' in another. The fact that issues remain to be addressed in these various areas can be directly attributed to a pattern of Iraqi obfuscation. Moreover, the nature of UNSCOM's mandate is such that files can never be pronounced ''closed.'' The UNSCOM must be able to investigate new leads as they arise in any area.

In addition to failing to comply with the WMD provisions of Security Council resolutions, the regime remains in violation of numerous other Security Council requirements. The regime has failed to be forthcoming with information on hundreds of Kuwaitis and some third-country nationals missing since the Iraqi occupation.

Iraq has also not returned to Kuwait the millions of dollars worth of Kuwaiti property looted during the occupation. This includes a vast store of military equipment. Earlier this year, Iraq dumped a large amount of military equipment on the Kuwaiti border in an attempt to convince the Council it was making a good-faith effort to comply. None of the equipment returned was operational. It had all been stripped bare of anything of value. Some of the material returned had not even originated in Kuwait; it was captured from Iran during the Iran-Iraq War. Some vehicles and items still bore hastily painted-over portraits of the Ayatollah Khomeini and contained Iranian identity papers. None of the top-of-the-line military equipment looted from Kuwait has been returned.

The Council on April 14 unanimously adopted Resolution 986, an effective means to provide relief for the hardship that ordinary Iraqis are suffering as a result of Saddam Hussein's failure to comply with Council requirements. Nonetheless, on June 1, Secretary General Boutros-Ghali informed the Security Council that Iraq had officially refused to implement this resolution. The sanctions regime does not prevent the shipment of food or medicine to Iraq. However, Saddam Hussein continues to squander Iraq's resources on his repressive security apparatus and personal palaces, while using the suffering of ordinary Iraqis as a propaganda tool to press for the lifting of sanctions. Resolution 986 undermines his self-serving excuses for neglecting the legitimate needs of the Iraqi people.

The no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq continue to deter Iraq from using its aircraft against its population. However, the Iraqi government persists in its brutal campaign against its perceived enemies throughout the country. Iraqi forces periodically shell villages in the south and the north with artillery. In the south, Iraq's repression

of the Shi'a population, and specifically the Marsh Arabs, continues, as does a policy of deliberate environmental devastation. The threat to the traditional way of life of Iraq's Marsh Arabs remains critical. In the last few years, the population of the marsh region has fallen sharply as Iraqi military operations have forcibly dispersed residents to other areas and thousands of Shi'a refugees have sought refuge in Iran.

The human rights situation in Iraq remains unchanged. As previously reported by the Special Rapporteur of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights (UNHRC), Max van der Stoel, the Iraqi military's repression against civilian populations continues, as do political killings, mass executions, and state-sponsored terrorism. Clearly, the Government of Iraq has not complied with the provisions of UNSC Resolution 688 demanding that it cease repression of its own people.

The Special Rapporteur has asserted that the Government of Iraq has engaged in war crimes and crimes against humanity, and may have committed violations of the 1948 Genocide Convention. The Special Rapporteur continues to call on the Government of Iraq to permit the stationing of human rights monitors inside Iraq to improve the flow of information and to provide independent verification of reports of human rights abuses. We continue to support Mr. van der Stoel's work and his call for monitors.

The Multinational Interception Force (MIF) continues to play a vital role in enforcing U.N. economic sanctions against Iraq. The Gulf states of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait have cooperated with the MIF by accepting ships intercepted for attempting to smuggle commodities from Iraq and in taking action against their cargoes in accordance with relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions, including Resolutions 665 and 778. In addition, the United States has provided information to the Governments of Panama, Honduras, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the United Arab Emirates concerning sanctions violations committed by vessels under their flags. Two of these governments have initiated deflagging proceedings, with Panama formally deflagging one vessel.

For more than 3 years, the story has not changed; the Baghdad regime flouts the sanctions, demonstrates disdain for the United Nations, and engages in actions that we believe constitute continuing contraventions of Security Council Resolutions 686, 687, and 688.

We are monitoring closely the plight of the civilian population throughout Iraq. Our bilateral assistance program in the north will continue, to the extent possible. We also will continue to make every effort, given the practical constraints, to assist the populations in southern and central Iraq through support for the continuation of U.N. humanitarian programs. Finally, we will continue to explore with our allies and Security Council partners means to compel Iraq to cooperate on humanitarian and human rights issues.

Security Council Resolution 687 affirmed that Iraq is liable under international law for compensating the victims of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The U.N. Compensation Commission (UNCC) has received about 2.6 million claims worldwide, with an asserted value of approximately $176 billion. The United States has submitted approximately 3,300 claims, with an asserted value of about $1.8 billion.

To date, the UNCC Governing Council has approved some 355,000 individual awards, worth about $1.39 billion. About 620 awards totaling over $11.8 million have been issued to U.S. claimants.

The UNCC has been able to pay only the first small awards for serious personal injury or death ($2.7 million). Unfortunately, the remainder of the awards cannot be paid at this time, because the U.N. Compensation Fund lacks sufficient funding. The awards are supposed to be financed by a deduction from the proceeds of future Iraqi oil sales, once such sales are permitted to resume. However, Iraq's refusal to meet the Security Council's terms for a resumption of oil sales has left the UNCC without adequate financial resources to pay the awards. Iraq's intransigence means that the victims of its aggression remain uncompensated for their losses 4 years after the end of the Gulf War.

In sum, Iraq is still a threat to regional peace and security. Thus, I continue to be determined to see Iraq comply fully with all

its obligations under the UNSC resolutions. I will oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates its overall compliance with the relevant resolutions. Iraq should adopt democratic processes, respect human rights, treat its people equitably, and adhere to basic norms of international behavior.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts, and will continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the National Urban Policy Report

August 3, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith my Administration's National Urban Policy Report, "Empowerment: A New Covenant With America's Communities," as required by 42 U.S.C. 4503(a). The Report provides a framework for empowering America's disadvantaged citizens and poor communities to build a brighter future for themselves, for their families and neighbors, and for America. The Report is organized around four principles:

First, it links families to work. It brings tax, education and training, housing, welfare, public safety, transportation, and capital access policies together to help families make the transition to self-sufficiency and independence. This linkage is critical to the transformation of our communities.

Second, it leverages private investment in our urban communities. It works with the market and the private sector to build upon the natural assets and competitive advantages of urban communities.

Third, it is locally driven. The days of made in Washington solutions, dictated by a distant Government, are gone. Instead, solutions must be locally crafted, and implemented by entrepreneurial public entities, private actors, and a growing network of community-based firms and organizations.

Fourth, it relies on traditional values—hard work, family, responsibility. The problems of so many inner-city neighborhoods—family break-up, teen pregnancy, abandonment, crime, drug use—will be solved only if individuals, families, and communities determine to help themselves.

These principles reflect an emerging consensus in the decades-long debate over urban policy. These principles are neither Democratic nor Republican: they are American. They will enable local communities, individuals and families, businesses, churches, community-based organizations, and civic groups to join together to seize the opportunities and to solve the problems in their own lives. They will put the private sector back to work for all families in all communities. I therefore invite the Congress to work with us on a bipartisan basis to implement an empowerment agenda for America's communities and families.

In a sense, poor communities represent an untapped economic opportunity for our whole country. While we work together to open foreign markets abroad to American-made goods and services, we also need to work together to open the economic frontiers of poor communities here at home. By enabling people and communities in genuine need to take greater responsibility for working harder and smarter together, we can unleash the greatest underused source of growth and renewal in each of the local regions that make up our national economy and civic life. This will be good for cities and suburbs, towns and villages, and rural and urban America. This will be good for families. This will be good for the country.

We have undertaken initiatives that seek to achieve these goals. Some seek to empower local communities to help themselves, including Empowerment Zones, Community Development banks, the Community Opportunity Fund, community policing, and enabling local schools and communities to best meet world-class standards. And some seek