Washington on January 10, 1995. The provisions of the Convention are explained in the report of the Department of State that accompanies this message.

Although the United States is already a party to the multilateral Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, which entered into force for the United States, following Senate advice and consent to ratification, on July 1, 1985, only two other OAS Member States have become parties to that Convention. Ratification of the Inter-American Convention on Serving Criminal Sentences Abroad would help fill a void by providing a mechanism for the reciprocal transfer of persons incarcerated in prisons in OAS Member States, to permit those individuals to serve their sentences in their home countries. A multilateral prisoner transfer convention for the Americas would also reduce, if not eliminate, the need for the United States to negotiate additional bilateral prisoner transfer treaties with countries in the hemisphere.

I recommend that the Senate promptly give its advice and consent to the ratification of this Convention, subject to an understanding and a reservation that are described in the accompanying State Department report.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 30, 1996.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 1.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Middle East Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

October 1, 1996

Middle East Summit

The President. Wait, wait. Relax, everybody. We came here to end the violence, not aggravate it. [*Laughter*] Let's get everybody in. Is everyone in? Let me say first that I am delighted to have King Hussein, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and Chairman Arafat here. I thank them for coming.

We have had some good conversations already. This is our first meeting, all four of us, together. But I think, with their presence here, it clearly symbolizes our commitment to end the violence and to get the peace process going again. We've come a long way in the last 3 years. No one wants to turn back. And I'm personally quite gratified by this opportunity to have the chance to visit with them, and I thank them for coming.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, are you ready to abide by your previous promise to abide by the peace agreements already made by Israel?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Absolutely. And our commitment to peace is also evident in the fact that we took up the President's kind offer, important offer, to come here and to try to put the peace process back on track. This is what we're doing together.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, is there any prospect at all of your accepting some sort of international commission of experts, archaeologists, religious leaders, to take a look at what you've done by opening up this tunnel, to simply reassure everyone that there is no potential violation of Muslim holy places?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. You know our position, and I don't think it would be wise to open up a discussion here. But I have a question for you: Don't you have questions for the other——

Q. Yes. Mr. President——

The President. We don't want to do a whole press conference here, we're just trying to——

Q. Mr. President, have you had a chance to consider the King's suggestion of an independent commission to look at this problem and possibly cool tempers that way and come up with some sort of a bridging proposal?

The President. Let me say again, this is our first opportunity to all meet together, and one of the things that I have learned over the last several years is that anything any of us say publicly could undermine our ability to make progress, which is the ultimate objective of this meeting. So I don't want to make any premature comments here until we have a chance to visit with each other and do some more work. We're going to work today, we're going to work tomorrow, and then I'll be glad to answer any questions that you may have.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

The President. Let's get everyone in. Is everyone in? Let me begin by saying that I am delighted to have His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Chairman Arafat here. I thank them for coming to Washington on short notice. I think it shows a common commitment to end the violence and get the peace process back on track. We are committed to that. We have been working this morning, but this is our first opportunity to be together, the four of us. And we'll be working the rest of the day and tomorrow, and then we'll have a statement to make and questions to answer.

But I'm very gratified that they have come here, and we are all committed to moving forward now.

Q. Mr. President, with your permission I'm going to ask a question in Arabic.

[*Following the question, Chairman Arafat answered in Arabic and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. President, do you agree with His Majesty's proposal, which—that establishing an international committee for Jerusalem?

The President. Well, His Majesty and I had a chance to speak about this very briefly, and we will be talking about it more. But as a matter of policy, I think I should not comment on anything relating to what we might be discussing today and tomorrow until we have finished, because I don't want to say anything that, even by accident, might make our task more difficult. I want to make our task easier.

The United States here—after all, our role is to try to help people get together and to move forward. The substantive decisions are decisions which have to be made by the people who live in the Middle East and who will share its future.

Q. Mr. President, how do you assess the first round?

[*One group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Let everyone get in. Tell me when everyone is here.

Let me begin by saying that I am very pleased and honored to have His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat here. I compliment them all for coming. I think it's evidence of their shared commitment to end violence, restore order, and invigorate the peace process and keep moving in the right direction.

We have been working this morning, but this is our first chance, all four of us, to be together. And I look forward to the rest of today and to tomorrow and to making some real progress here. I thank them for coming, and we're going to do our very best.

Q. Mr. President, Senator Dole and Speaker Gingrich are calling you not to pressure Prime Minister Netanyahu. Is pressure really needed today for you to move these leaders ahead in the track of peace?

The President. What the United States has done since I have been President is not to pressure anyone but to get the parties together and to explore alternatives and to see what could be done to find common interests and shared values. And I think our approach has been reasonably successful, although ultimately all the credit for the progress that has been made goes to the people who are living in the region; it is their future.

Our role is to try to help bring people together and create the conditions in which a successful resolution of these matters can occur. And that is what we will try to do.

Q. Mr. President, are you expecting from this meeting a schedule for the implementation of the interim agreement, including, of course, the redeployment in Hebron?

The President. First of all, as a matter of policy I do not comment on meetings before they occur. We are going to work together. I don't want to say anything. I don't want anyone in our administration to say anything that will make our difficult task even harder. So what we're going to do is go to work, see how far we can go, see what we can produce and then we'll make a comment tomorrow and then answer questions about it. But I don't want to comment about it now. Nothing I say could do anything to help move forward what we're trying to do.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House, prior to a meeting with King Hussein I of Jordan, Prime Minister

Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel, and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Signing Witness Retaliation, Witness Tampering, and Jury Tampering Legislation

October 1, 1996

Today I am pleased to sign H.R. 3120, legislation to protect the integrity of our legal system and ensure the safety of our families.

The United States is a nation of laws. We have always been committed to making our legal system the best, the most effective, and the fairest in the world.

In the last three and a half years, we have worked hard to live up to that fundamental obligation—putting more police on the street; getting gangs and guns and drugs off the street; introducing tougher penalties for a wide range of crimes; appointing more judges with the American Bar Association's top rating than any administration in 20 years.

Today, we take an important new step. This legislation dramatically increases the punishment for those who would influence, tamper with, or retaliate against witnesses, jurors, and court officers in federal criminal cases.

Let me be very clear: The integrity of our legal system depends on the integrity of our courts. And the integrity of our courts depends on individual citizens serving as impartial jurors—free from intimidation or temptation. We must see to it that juries decide cases based only on evidence presented in the courtroom. Our prosecutors must have a fair chance to make their case. Our fight against crime is too important, our system of justice too sacred, the security of our people too vital, for justice to be denied because a jury has been tampered with.

With this legislation, we send a simple message to those who would abuse our system of justice: When the integrity of our laws and the safety our people are at stake, we will take no chances.

NOTE: H.R. 3120, approved October 1, was assigned Public Law No. 104–214.

Statement on Signing the Carjacking Correction Act of 1996

October 1, 1996

Today, I am proud to sign the Carjacking Correction Act of 1996. This legislation will increase the security of all Americans—particularly women.

Carjacking is a terrible crime. It is punishable under Federal law. In cases where carjackers have inflicted "serious bodily injury" on their victims, this tough law gets even tougher—the maximum sentence may be increased from 15 to 25 years.

Unfortunately, in a May 21, 1996, decision, in the case of *United States* v. *Rivera*, a panel on the First Circuit Court of Appeals held that a rape that took place during a carjacking did not constitute a "serious bodily injury."

That's plain wrong, and the legislation I am signing today will prevent this mistake from ever happening again. This legislation says clearly: Sexual assault causes serious bodily injury. Carjackers who rape their victims will meet with nothing less than the full force of the law.

This legislation builds on the work we have already done to make America safer for women. For too long, the threat of violence to women was not taken seriously enough. As American women were forced to look over their shoulders, society looked the other way.

So we took action. We passed the Violence Against Women Act, established a national registry of sex offenders, created a national 24-hour domestic violence hotline, and made "three strikes and you're out" the law of the land. We passed Megan's Law—and now States must tell communities whether a dangerous sexual predator is in their midst. We gave America the Brady bill—keeping guns out of the hands of 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers.

Last week, I signed into law a strong, new Federal law to stop stalkers. Yesterday, I signed legislation to extend the Brady bill to keep guns away from people with a history of domestic violence.

I want to thank Representative Conyers for his hard work on this bill. And I want to add that this legislation is proof of the progress we can make for the American people when we put politics aside and join with