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<b>Leonel Fernández Reyna</b> President Dominican Republic	<b>Manuel Esquivel</b> Prime Minister Belize

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

### **Statement on Juvenile Crime Legislation**

*May 8, 1997*

Today, the House of Representatives missed an important opportunity to fight and prevent the scourge of juvenile crime. I oppose passage of H.R. 3, the Juvenile Crime Control Act, because it fails to provide a comprehensive plan to crack down on youth and gang violence.

As I began my second term as President, I made juvenile crime and gangs my top law enforcement priority over the next 4 years. I called on every police officer, prosecutor, and parent in America to work together to keep our young people safe and to keep young criminals off our streets.

America's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence strategy must declare war on gangs; target funding for additional local prosecutors to pursue, prosecute, and punish gang members; extend the Brady law so violent teen criminals will never have the right to purchase a gun; require Federal dealers to sell a child safety lock with every gun, to protect our kids from using guns to hurt each other or themselves; and target resources to keep schools open late, on weekends, and in the summer, to keep young people off the street and out of trouble.

The legislation passed in the House today fails to provide any of these necessary measures to give law enforcement, prosecutors, and parents the tools they need to combat gangs and youth violence in their communities.

Four years ago, we made a commitment to take our streets back from crime and violence. We had a comprehensive plan of 100,000 new community police officers on the street, tough new penalties on the books, and steps to keep guns out of the hands of criminals with the assault weapons ban and the Brady bill.

Our plan is working. Last year, violent crime came down for the 5th year in a row. And for the first time in 7 years, the rate of young people arrested for violent crime and murder has gone down. But we cannot waste this opportunity to bring down violent juvenile crime even further. I will continue to work with Congress to ensure passage of legislation that will give our children the safest and most secure future possible.

### **Proclamation 7001—Jewish Heritage Week, 1997**

*May 8, 1997*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

The American Jewish community, with its rich and diverse culture, has served as a continuous source of ethical and moral values for our great Nation since its founding. The principles of Jewish heritage—family, community, faith, and service—parallel the ideals that inspired our country's founders and that anchor our modern democracy.

Members of the Jewish faith have long added to America's cultural life a legacy of law and human compassion, a struggle for freedom and fairness, and a love of learning and the arts. Drawing from their proud heritage, Jewish citizens have made vital contributions to every sector of society, as scientists and soldiers, judges and teachers, artists, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists.

Jewish traditions lend special meaning to the spring season. The recent celebration of Passover commemorates the exodus of Jew-