

Statement on Protecting the Northern Right Whale

April 23, 1998

Today I instructed the United States representatives to the International Maritime Organization to seek strong measures to protect the northern right whale, one of the world's most endangered marine mammals.

Like many other species of whale, the northern right whale was once hunted nearly to extinction. The 300 or so that survive spend much of the year in waters off of Cape Cod and off the Georgia and Florida coasts. Biologists believe the greatest human threat they face today is collisions with large ships. We must address this threat so these magnificent creatures can flourish once again.

Under our proposal, which the IMO will address when it meets in July, commercial ships entering the whales' calving and feeding grounds will be required to report by radio to the U.S. Coast Guard, which will relay back the latest information on the whales' locations and advice on avoiding collisions. We believe this reporting system is essential if we are to ensure the survival of these majestic creatures.

Joint Statement on United States-Turkmenistan Relations

April 23, 1998

During their April 23, 1998 meeting in Washington, Presidents Clinton and Niyazov agreed to expand cooperation between the United States and the Republic of Turkmenistan to promote its development as a market democracy. The United States strongly supports Turkmenistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and respects its neutrality. Through governmental and private sector partnerships, the United States and Turkmenistan aim to strengthen political, economic, security, commercial and agricultural ties for the benefit of both countries.

Presidents Clinton and Niyazov agreed on the importance of rapid development of Caspian energy resources and efficient export routes to world markets to promote regional development. U.S. companies are deeply en-

gaged in these activities and this engagement is growing. The two Presidents focused particular attention on strengthening east-west routes in the Eurasian transport corridor. They expressed their support for practical steps to develop a trans-Caspian pipeline as part of a multiple pipeline network. President Niyazov welcomed the support of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency to assess the feasibility of a trans-Caspian pipeline. In this context, the Presidents favor early resolution of the Caspian delimitation dispute. They welcomed the recent positive developments in the Afghanistan peace process, which could create new commercial opportunities and advance prospects for construction of a trans-Afghan pipeline.

The United States and Turkmenistan seek to expand economic and commercial relations, including greater trade and investment. The two nations will work toward completing a Bilateral Investment Treaty. Both Presidents welcomed the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between USAID and the Government of Turkmenistan on technical and professional assistance to the Turkmen energy sector, and of a Cooperation Agreement between the U.S. Export Import Bank and the Government of Turkmenistan. Extensive potential exists to deepen agricultural cooperation, building on the already active role of U.S. firms in Turkmenistan. The United States and Turkmenistan agreed to launch a bilateral dialogue on energy policy and commercial issues.

Turkmenistan has made significant progress toward economic stabilization. To sustain this progress, President Clinton encouraged deeper structural reforms, including privatization, in close cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Such steps will facilitate Turkmenistan's integration into the global economy. The United States supports Turkmenistan's accession to the World Trade Organization on commercial terms generally applied to newly acceding countries.

Democratization, economic reform and observance of human rights are essential to Turkmenistan's future. Rapid, concrete steps toward reform in these areas will demonstrate Turkmenistan's intent to abide by