

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the Hutchinson Union Building.

Statement on Disaster Assistance for Victims of the Eruption of Mount Nyiragongo

January 25, 2002

On January 17, the people of Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo suffered from an enormous natural disaster. Many homes, shops, roads, and schools were buried, and many lives were lost or disrupted by the flow of molten lava from Mount Nyiragongo. The Congolese people have shown enormous spirit and resilience, already returning to the land where their homes once stood to recover and rebuild.

I commend President Kabila of Congo and President Kagame of Rwanda for working together to address the humanitarian needs of the people of Goma who have been hurt by this volcanic eruption. The United States will help the victims of this disaster, and we have already allocated up to \$3 million for relief efforts. I have sent a team of experts from the U.S. Agency for International Development to the region to assess how this aid can be directed most effectively. At the same time, I have ordered the immediate dispatch of two relief flights carrying blankets, shelter material, and water storage equipment to support the most urgent needs of the Congolese people. The United States will continue to work closely with the international community to help those affected by this disaster to rebuild their town and their lives.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 20

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush returned from Camp David, MD, to Washington, DC.

January 21

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

January 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Charleston, WV, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Belle, WV. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Helen Clark of New Zealand to the White House for a meeting on bilateral and international issues on March 26.

The President signed the recess appointment of Michael J. Bartlett to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

The President signed the recess appointment of William B. Cowen to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

The President signed the recess appointment of Cynthia A. Glassman to be a Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The President signed the recess appointment of Isaac C. Hunt, Jr., to be a Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The President signed the recess appointment of JoAnn Johnson to be a member of the Board of the National Credit Union Administration.

The President signed the recess appointment of Deborah Matz to be a member of the Board of the National Credit Union Administration.

January 23

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. Later, he met with bipartisan House and Senate leaders concerning the upcoming agenda for the year and domestic issues. Then, he met with Members of Congress concerning military issues.