

American products exported to Colombia. These tariffs reduce the competitiveness of thousands of American companies that do business in that nation. By approving our free trade agreement, Colombia—Congress can directly benefit American workers and ranchers and farmers and give them greater confidence about our economic future.

Congress is coming back to Washington next month. One of their top priorities should be to approve this vital agreement with Colombia, as well as with Panama and South Korea. These free trade agreements will strengthen our relationships with key allies. They will create new opportunities for our consumers and businesses. They will reassure our trading partners that America will not give in to pessimism or protectionism. They will show that we honor our commitments.

And now it's my honor to sign the Andean Trade Preference Act.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:11 p.m. in Room 350 at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. H.R. 7222, approved October 16, was assigned Public Law No. 110-436.

Proclamation 8308—National Character Counts Week, 2008

October 16, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The strength of our Nation is found in the character of our citizens. During National Character Counts Week, we recommit ourselves to instilling strong values in our youth and encourage all Americans to develop good character.

Parents and families can teach children the timeless principles of respect, responsibility, honesty, commitment, and compassion. In our communities, parents, mentors, clergy members, teachers, coaches, and neighbors

serve as role models by dedicating their time and talents to help others. At home and abroad, members of our Armed Forces exemplify the true character of our Nation by bravely protecting our freedom and serving a cause greater than self.

The Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, connects young people with caring adults and community organizations that help them avoid risky behavior and achieve success. By becoming actively involved in the lives of children, we can help our young people make the right choices and lead lives of integrity and achievement.

National Character Counts Week is an opportunity for our citizens to reaffirm their responsibility to their communities and to recognize the importance of teaching strong values to our next generation of leaders. For more information on ways to set a positive example and make a lasting contribution to the future of our country, citizens can visit volunteer.gov.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 19 through October 25, 2008, as National Character Counts Week. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, parents, students, and all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 20, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 21.

Proclamation 8309—National Forest Products Week, 2008

October 16, 2008

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

During National Forest Products Week, we highlight our country's commitment to protect and wisely use America's forests for our Nation's prosperity and well-being.

Across our country, citizens rely on forest products to meet their daily needs. Our forests enable us to produce goods such as paper and furniture, provide raw materials such as lumber for homes and buildings, and offer job opportunities that bring economic security for many Americans.

My Administration is steadfast in its commitment to protect our forests from both manmade and natural harm. It is vital that we continue to make progress in conserving our natural resources and using them responsibly. Since 2002, we have worked to restore our forests and protected them against catastrophic fires as part of the Healthy Forests Initiative. Americans take great pride in our country's natural splendor, and by working together to be good stewards of the environment, we can leave our children and grandchildren a healthy and flourishing land.

Recognizing the importance of our forests in ensuring our Nation's well-being, the Congress, by Public Law 86-753 (36 U.S.C. 123), as amended, has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in October of each year as "National Forest Products Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 19 through October 25, 2008, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 20, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 21.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia

October 16, 2008

On October 21, 1995, by Executive Order 12978, the President declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701-1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia, and the extreme level of violence, corruption, and harm such actions cause in the United States and abroad.

Because the actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause an extreme level of violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad, the national emergency declared on October 21, 1995, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond October 21, 2008. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 16, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., October 17, 2008]