Monday, December 18, 2000

Volume 36, Issue 50; ISSN: 0511-4187

Statement on action against international crime
William J Clinton

December 15, 2000

The growing reach of international crime poses threats to American citizens and American interests, both at home and abroad. Illegal activity from terrorism to trafficking in arms, drugs, or humans violates our values and threatens our safety. Intellectual property theft, financial fraud, and corruption also can endanger our prosperity and undercut public confidence in democracy and free markets around the world.

To confront these challenges, today I am pleased to announce several important initiatives in our ongoing efforts to combat international crime.

First, we are releasing a comprehensive International Crime Threat Assessment, prepared at my direction, as part of our International Crime Control Strategy adopted in May, 1998. The new assessment highlights the global dimensions of international crime and the ways this pervasive problem threatens U.S. interests. This broader understanding is necessary if we, together with our international partners, are to strengthen our response to this global problem.

Second, earlier this week in Palermo, Italy, the United States joined many other countries in signing the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, along with two supplementary protocols on migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. By harmonizing criminal laws and promoting increased cooperation, the new convention and its protocols will enable the international community to better combat international organized crime.

Third, the Departments of State and Justice are establishing a Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Coordination Center. The Center will integrate and improve our efforts to counter these distinct but related global crime problems. The Center also will promote and assist increased efforts by foreign governments and international organizations to combat these problems.

The United States is strongly committed to strengthening our international crime control programs to achieve a world of greater safety, prosperity, and justice. We urge the international community to join us in enhancing our common efforts to advance these common aims.