

supplemental would also provide funds to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq and to help protect the American homeland in this time of high alert.

I want to thank the veterans' groups for their strong support, unwavering support, for this wartime supplemental, and I call upon the United States Congress to pass the supplemental as quickly as possible.

I also appreciate all the veterans are doing for America's military families in time of hardship. I appreciate your compassion. Across our country, local chapters of the American Legion, for example, are stepping forward to help those families in practical ways, from making household repairs to helping with child care. Members of the VFW and Auxiliary are sending care packages with baby supplies to military families. Operation Uplink program is helping thousands of service members keep in touch with their loved ones.

Both the American Legion and the VFW are working with the USA Freedom Corps on a project called "On The Home Front." This effort will match Americans who want to volunteer their times and skills with the military families who need help. Because of all this generosity, our men and women serving overseas will know that their loved ones are not facing this time alone.

I want to thank the veterans' groups for understanding the compassion needed to help those who are here, wondering and worrying about their loved ones overseas. The people who serve in the military are giving their best to this country, and we have the responsibility to give them our full support, our full support not only here in Washington, DC, but our support all across the country.

I want to thank each veteran here today and across our land for the lifetime of service you have given our Nation. I thank you for standing behind the men and women of today's Armed Forces as they fight for the liberty of an oppressed people, for the security of the United States and our friends and allies, and for the peace of the world. May God bless our troops.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Executive Order 13293—
Amendment to Executive Order
10448, Establishing the National
Defense Service Medal**

March 28, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, and in order to extend eligibility for the award of the National Defense Service Medal to members in good standing in the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces of the United States, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 10448 of April 22, 1953, as amended, is further amended:

1. by inserting "or service in good standing in the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces" after "active military service" each place it appears; and
2. by striking "additional period of active duty" and inserting in lieu thereof "additional period."

Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the exercise of authority granted by Executive Order 12776 of October 8, 1991.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 28, 2003.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:33 a.m., March 31, 2003]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 1.

**Executive Order 13294—
Regulations Relating to Hazardous
Duty Incentive Pay, Aviation Career
Incentive Pay, and Submarine Duty
Incentive Pay**

March 28, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 301, 301a, and 301c of title 37, United States

Code, and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, with respect to members of the uniformed services under their respective jurisdictions, are hereby designated and empowered to exercise, without approval, ratification, or other action by the President, the authority vested in the President by sections 301, 301a, and 301c of title 37, United States Code. The Secretaries shall consult each other in the exercise of such authority to ensure similar treatment for similarly situated members of the uniformed services unless the needs of their respective uniformed services require differing treatment.

Sec. 2. Executive Order 11157 of June 22, 1964, as amended, and Executive Order 11800 of August 17, 1974, as amended, are hereby revoked.

Sec. 3. This order is not intended to create, nor does it create, any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, officers, employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 28, 2003.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,
11:33 a.m., March 31, 2003]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 1.

Proclamation 7657—To Take Certain Actions Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act With Respect to the Republic of The Gambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo

March 28, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

1. Section 506A(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “1974 Act”) (19 U.S.C. 2466a(a)(1)), as added by section 111(a) of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (title I of Public Law 106–200) (AGOA), authorizes the President to designate a country listed in section 107 of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3706) as a “beneficiary sub-Saharan African country” if the President determines that the country meets the eligibility requirements set forth in section 104 of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3703), as well as the eligibility criteria set forth in section 502 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462).

2. Section 104 of the AGOA authorizes the President to designate a country listed in section 107 of the AGOA as an “eligible sub-Saharan African country” if the President determines that the country meets certain eligibility requirements.

3. Section 112(b)(3)(B) of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3721(b)(3)(B)) provides special rules for certain apparel articles imported from “lesser developed beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries.”

4. Pursuant to section 104 of the AGOA and section 506A(a)(1) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that the Republic of The Gambia (The Gambia) meets the eligibility requirements set forth or referenced therein, and I have decided to designate The Gambia as an eligible sub-Saharan African country and as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.