



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY
2105 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404 USA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2004

Contact: Patricia Jurewicz, 612-870-3414, patricia@iatp.org
Ben Lilliston, 202-223-3740, blilliston@iatp.org

President Bush Signs Fewest International Treaties in last 20 years

Presidential Comparisons Show U.S. Taking Step Back From Treaty System

Minneapolis – President George W. Bush has signed the fewest international treaties of any U.S. President since Ronald Reagan in his first term, according to a new analysis by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). President Bush also took the unprecedented step of nullifying the U.S. signature from an international treaty (the International Criminal Court).

The summary of the Presidential administrations dating back to 1887 looked at 549 multilateral treaties relevant to the United States and tracks ratifications as well as signatures. Over the past 117 years, the U.S. has ratified 157 of these treaties. Ratifications, which are legally binding need two-thirds approval by the Senate. Signatures, which are given by the head of state or a senior administration official, are not legally binding but do reflect a country's willingness to cooperate with the treaty.

Currently, President Bush has signed six international treaties and eight have been ratified during his term. While President Reagan only signed five treaties his first term, he signed another nine his second term. In addition, a total of 20 treaties were ratified during Reagan's two terms, giving even President Reagan a far better record than President George W. Bush in supporting the treaty system. The analysis of U.S. involvement in the international treaty system, broken down by president, can be viewed at: www.iatp.org.

"We are seeing a clear retreat from the international system by President Bush," said Patricia Jurewicz, Director of IATP's Global Cooperation Project and author of the analysis. "When we face so many difficult global challenges, from terrorism to AIDs to famine to climate change, it is perplexing that this administration has taken a step back from the international community."

The analysis shows when a president signed a treaty and if that treaty was then ratified during the same administration or if it took longer, which is the case with the Convention on the Crime of Genocide – ratified 40 years after it was first signed. This gives a true picture of presidents that are both committed to an issue and then champion its passing inside Congress. Bush's record indicates that no treaties were both signed and ratified during his administration. "There are a number of important treaties President Bush could affix his signature to that would send a positive message to the world such as the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families or the Convention Prohibiting Land Mines," said Jurewicz.

In the 60 years since the UN was founded, President Clinton signed the most treaties during a single term (20 in his second), the most overall (31), and ratified the most during a single term (16 in first term), and most overall (30). President Reagan ratified the next highest overall total with 20. And President Truman signed the next highest total with 18.

Here is a summary of Presidential involvement in international treaties:

<u>U.S. President</u>	<u>Treaty Actions</u>
George W. Bush	8 Ratified, 6 Signed, Nullified 1 Signature
Bill Clinton	30 Ratified (16 first term, 14 second term), 31 Signed (11 first term, 20 second term)
George H.W. Bush	10 Ratified, 13 Signed
Ronald Reagan	20 Ratified (12 first term, 8 second term), 14 Signed (5 first term, 9 second term)
Jimmy Carter	9 Ratified, 11 Signed
Gerald Ford	8 Ratified, 2 Signed (half-term)
Richard Nixon	18 Ratified (16 first term, 2 second half-term), 16 Signed (13 first term, 3 second half-term)
L.B. Johnson	16 Ratified (1 first half-term), 15 second term), 7 Signed (1 first half-term, 6 second term)
John Kennedy	4 Ratified, 6 Signed (half-term)
Dwight Eisenhower	8 Ratified (6 first term, 2 second term), 13 Signed (6 first term, 7 second term)
Harry Truman	14 Ratified (6 first term, 8 second term), 18 Signed (11 first term, 7 second term)
Franklin Roosevelt	6 Ratified (all in second term), 0 Signed

The record of U.S. presidents within the international treaty system comes as part of a new report issued by IATP called, the *Treaty Database: A Monitor of U.S. Participation in Global Affairs*. It can be found at: www.iatp.org.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy promotes resilient family farms, rural communities and ecosystems around the world through research and education, science and technology, and advocacy.

##