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International Youth Year, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America rejoices in the energy, the imagination, and the promise of her young people. Whether in voluntary service, athletics, education, music, military service or within the family, young Americans display an enthusiasm, creativity, idealism, and dedication that have accomplished so much for our society and the world. Their patriotism and commitment to peace with freedom ensure a vigorous American democracy and a safer world in the years ahead.

In 1985 the United States joins the celebration of United Nations' International Youth Year. If we are to honor the potential of America's youth, we must remember that the most powerful force for progress comes not from governments or public programs, but from the vital traditions of a free people. Parents, youth organizations, and teachers deserve our support, encouragement, and thanks for the indispensable role they play in fostering and strengthening these traditions.

History makes clear that progress is swiftest when people are free to worship, create, and build—when they can determine their own destiny and benefit from their own initiative. The dream of human progress through freedom is still the most revolutionary idea in the world, and it is still the most successful. It is the priceless heritage America bestows on each new generation, with the hope that succeeding generations the world over will come to better know its fruits.

In the coming months, I urge American youth to reflect on our precious freedoms, to exchange ideas among themselves and with young people around the world, and to join with others in efforts to increase mutual understanding, enhance the observance of human rights, and promote world peace. In short, I urge our youth to be what they have been for many generations: America's proudest ambassadors of goodwill and our national values. One such opportunity is being offered by the people of Jamaica as they host the first-ever International Youth Conference in early April. The Conference will enable young Americans to discuss with their peers in other countries ways in which they can help shape the world of tomorrow.

Let all of us approach this year dedicated to youth by resolving to use our God-given talents and freedom to elevate our ideals, deepen our understanding, and strengthen our determination to make this world a better place for ourselves and for the generations of young people who will follow.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim 1985 as International Youth Year in the United States. I invite the Governors of the several States, the chief officials of local governments, and all Americans to observe this year with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

Ronald Reagan