

**Kosovo Refugees**  
**Fort Dix, New Jersey**  
**May 5, 1999**

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**PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION**

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**Welcoming of Kosovo Refugees to the U.S.  
Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton**

**Fort Dix, New Jersey  
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Well I wanted to come and on behalf of my husband, the President of the United States, as well as the government and the people of our country, to welcome you here. I know that you have had a long journey and you are very tired, but you look very good to me as I look at you right now.

I have also brought with me some people who will be very concerned to work with you in the next days and weeks. I want to introduce these people to you. You've already met Lavinia Limon [head of Office of Refugee Resettlement at HHS]. And next to her is Senator Frank Lautenberg, who is in the United States Senate from New Jersey. And Donna Shalala, the woman in the black suit, is the head of our Health & Human Services Agency in the United States. And next to her is the woman who is the governor of New Jersey, Governor Whitman. And next is Doris Meissner, who is the head of our Immigration & Naturalization Services from Washington. And next to her is a woman who is with USAID that has been working very hard in Macedonia and Albania—Hattie Babbitt is the assistant director of USAID. And then the final gentleman is the secretary of the Army, Secretary Caldera, who has worked with all of the military men and women who will be working at this site to help you. So, Secretary Caldera.

We want you to know that the American people have been very sad and very angry by what they have seen happening to you over the last weeks and months. Our hearts and our prayers have been with you. And now we want to show you that our hearts and our homes are open to you as well. We want to make your visit here as comfortable as possible, but we know that your thoughts are thousands of miles away with family members and other loved ones who are still in Kosovo or in the refugee camps. And we know that the thing you want the most is to be able to be reunited with your family and your friends and to return to your homes to live in peace.

That is the goal that my husband, the United States and our NATO allies share. We will not let Mr. Milosevic succeed in keeping you out of your home. We will continue to work to create a peaceful Kosovo, where you can return home as soon as possible and build your country again. And we want to be sure that you can return with security and with self-government, to work together to build a country where people of every heritage can shape their own destiny in freedom and peace.

Now I know that after traveling a long time, particularly with children, now you need to continue to get settled in and find where you'll sleep and make sure that all of your needs are met. So I will be saying goodbye, and leaving you with the many, many people who are here to help you.