

Arrival in Slovakia  
7/6/96

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL IN SLOVAKIA  
JULY 6, 1996**

I am very pleased to visit your beautiful country today. In the last several days I have visited Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic. I have seen how the people of Central Europe are striving, sometimes against great odds, to make freedom and democracy work for their societies.

In recent years, Slovakia has been through two momentous changes: its freedom from the tyranny of communism, and its emergence as an independent nation. Today Slovakia aspires to join the democratic family of nations, and we support that aspiration.

During the Velvet Revolution, the people of Slovakia made it clear that they embrace the principles of democracy. Now they must assure that those principles take root and allow for the growth of a civil society with respect for human rights, rule of law, an independent judiciary and a free press.

I bring with me a message of encouragement from the American people. During this visit, I will meet not only with your government leaders, but also with private citizens. In particular, I will meet with the representatives of non-governmental organizations who will play a crucial role in the building of your democracy.