

3/22/97 Dorothy Duncan Cntr.
for the Blind, Harare

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

(Remarks at the Dorothy Duncan Center for the Blind--
Harare--3/22/97)

I am delighted to be here this morning, and especially to be here with the children who have shown me what they are learning and how they are taking advantage of equipment and opportunities that have been provided for them, and I want to thank Sister Catherine, her staff, and particularly her volunteers who make all of this possible.

This is yet another example of what is happening in Africa because of increased trade and investment opportunities. African economies are on the move, and dozens of African countries are undertaking economic reforms working to transform themselves from state-run economies to open markets that give full life and scope to human endeavor.

In thirty countries, economies have grown at the strong average rate of three to four percent over the last year, and here in Zimbabwe, that growth rate has been seven percent. American companies have played an important role in that resurgence, and I'm delighted that we have with us three of those companies who have made an investment and are making a difference here in Zimbabwe. The example they are setting -- IBM, Coca-Cola, and Johnson & Johnson, shows that we can and should do business here in Africa and here in Zimbabwe.

American companies hold only seven percent of the African market, yet even that small percentage translates into one hundred thousand American jobs. Just think if we increased the percentage of trade and investment that we have on this continent what that would mean for the United States as well as the countries here.

American companies are known for giving back, and these companies represent a long-standing American tradition. Not only are they developing good businesses - they are contributing to their communities. IBM donated computers and other high-tech equipment to this school; Coca-Cola, in addition to creating more than 3,000 jobs in Zimbabwe, trains business students, works to protect the environment, and promotes the sports teams and arts events that strengthen the fabric of Zimbabwean life; Johnson & Johnson is working hand in hand with Zimbabwe's world-leading family planning efforts, and is also working to fight drug abuse and combat AIDS. These companies are responsible corporate citizens in America, and they are responsible corporate citizens in Zimbabwe.

Africa's renewal depends on democracy. It depends on social investments in education and health care. Sister Catherine told me that many of the children who are blind are blind because of measles, a disease that can be eliminated from Zimbabwe just as it has been eliminated from other countries. But Africa also depends on foreign investment to build and sustain its economies. That's what these companies are doing here, and we very much appreciate how both Africa and America will benefit from these efforts.