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Departure skideway

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
RUSSIA DEPARTURE STATEMENT  
NOVEMBER 16, 1997

I want to thank the Russian people, and especially the people of Yekaterinburg and Novosibirsk, for their extraordinary hospitality. Though my time in Russia was far too short, I feel privileged to have had the opportunity visit your country to reinforce the strong ties between our two nations and to see firsthand the critical role the regions of your country are playing in advancing democratic and economic reforms.

In Yekaterinburg, I was honored to spend time with my good friend, Naina Yeltsin. Together, we visited the Bonum Center to meet with children suffering from congenital defects. We also had the opportunity to take part in a town hall meeting with women representing non-governmental organizations in the region. That evening, we were privileged to hear a wonderful concert by the Ural Philharmonic.

In Novosibirsk, I visited the city's fascinating museum of Archaeology and Ethnography. I then had the opportunity to give an address on democracy and education at Akademgorodok. Before I left, I was fortunate enough to have the chance to meet with a local family to learn more about the changes taking place in Russia today.

In both cities, I was delighted to have had the opportunity to meet with local elected officials.

I hope that in my brief time here I have been able to convey the warmth and friendship the American people have for the people of Russia. When I return home, I will bring with me wonderful memories of the people I met here, excitement about the progress I have seen, and an even greater sense of the common bond that unites our two countries.