

Arrival Tashkent, Uzbekistan

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
UZBEKISTAN ARRIVAL STATEMENT
TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN
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I am delighted to be here in Uzbekistan. I have come to Uzbekistan and to Central Asia on behalf of my husband, the President, and the American people to reinforce the strong, but young ties between our two nations. I want to witness firsthand how you are progressing on the road toward democracy, civil society, and an economy grounded in open markets and free enterprise. And I want to bring a message of friendship and support from the American people, who stand with you on this journey.

With its unique position along the ancient Silk Road, Uzbekistan has always been a marketplace of both goods and ideas. During my visits to Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand, I look forward to seeing the rich cultural heritage you have sought to preserve, and the new history you are writing for the future. I want to talk about our common goal to make cultural diversity a source of pride, not division. I will see what our governments are doing together to give the people of Uzbekistan what I call the tools of opportunity: health care, credit, education. And I look forward to hearing the views of women and students, as they strive to make their voices heard in this new independent country.

I want to thank President and Mrs. Karimov -- and the people of Uzbekistan -- for the warm welcome you have extended me. The United States is proud of its partnership with Uzbekistan. I look forward to strengthening the ties between our two countries, to learning more about your reforms, and to exploring new ways that we can ensure a peaceful and more prosperous future for all the people of Uzbekistan and Central Asia.