

ARRIVAL STATEMENT
EL SALVADOR
NOVEMBER 16, 1998

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
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I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to make my first visit to El Salvador. I hope my coming here will strengthen the ties of friendship, trade and culture -- and a deep commitment to democracy -- that unite our two countries.

Like all Americans, I am deeply saddened by the severe loss of life and property and unimaginable human suffering wrought by Hurricane Mitch throughout this region. The President and I would like to extend our sympathy, along with that of all Americans, to the people of El Salvador. We will stand by the people of El Salvador now -- as you deal with emergency needs of food, water, housing and transportation -- as well as in the future -- for the long term reconstruction of your country.

I know that the task of reconstruction will be enormous, and I am here in part to announce additional disaster relief to El Salvador and to the entire region. I have just come from Honduras and Nicaragua to express our commitment to those storm-ravaged countries as well, and to announce new aid that will bring our total support to \$250 million in the region.

During my visit, I look forward to meeting with President and Mrs. Calderon Sol, as well as with women leaders from the entire political spectrum, and to learn more about your nation's historic transition from conflict to peace and reconciliation since the signing of the Peace Accords six years ago.

I also look forward to visiting the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women, and learning more about how both governmental and non-governmental institutions are working to improve the lives of women and children.

I'm especially pleased to be able to participate in a forum on domestic violence organized by Mrs. Calderon Sol, which will bring together educators, health care providers, and government and NGO officials to discuss this critical issue for women and the entire society.

I will also be learning more about what your government is doing to promote education reform -- which is so critical to creating a brighter future for the young people of El Salvador.