

ARRIVAL STATEMENT
GUATEMALA
NOVEMBER 18, 1998

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
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I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to make my first trip to Guatemala. I hope that my visit here will further strengthen the ties of friendship between our two countries. I look forward to seeing first hand the remarkable progress that this country has made in the last two years since the Peace Accords were signed.

Like all Americans, I am deeply saddened by the severe loss of life and property wrought by Hurricane Mitch throughout this region. The President and I would like to extend our sympathy, along with all Americans, to the people of Guatemala. We will stand by the people of Guatemala 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 great, and I am here in part to announce additional disaster relief to Guatemala and the entire region. I have just come from Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, to express our commitment to those storm-ravaged countries, and to announce new aid which will bring our total relief support to over \$250 million for all of Central America.

During my visit here, I look forward to meeting with President and Mrs. Alvaro Arzu, as well as with women leaders who fought on different sides of the conflict -- and who are now coming together to lead their country into a new chapter of peace and reconciliation.

I am also looking forward to visiting the Colonial Museum in Antigua, and learning more about the education reform that is taking place in Guatemala -- which is so critical to the continuing growth and progress of this nation. I will also visit a hospital, to witness first hand the strides you are making to reduce maternal mortality, and expand access to health services to all of Guatemala's citizens.

I am particularly pleased and honored to have the opportunity to address Guatemala's Congress, and congratulate your entire nation for all you've done to heal the wounds from 36 years of war, and build a peaceful, democratic, and inclusive Guatemala for the future.