

Peace Corps Oath Ceremony  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
November 21, 1998

**Remarks of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton**  
**Ceremony of the Oath of Service by American Peace Corps Volunteers in Haiti**  
**Residence of the U.S. Ambassador, Port-au-Prince, Republic of Haiti**  
**November 21, 1998**

Thank you all. I am delighted that we could be joined here by Geri Préval, the First Lady of Haiti, and I'd like to ask her to stand so that all of you can see her.

We owe the great honor of being here in the Residence to our Ambassador and I want to thank him as well for his support.

I see before me another group of Peace Corps Volunteers, and I am always pleased, when I travel around the world, to have a chance to visit with Peace Corps volunteers. I've done it on every continent and in many different meetings, and I never fail to be impressed and energized by the people whom I meet. I want to thank you all for the extraordinary commitment that you have made.

When my husband visited Haiti back in 1995, he promised the people of Haiti that Peace Corps volunteers would return to help. They have, and they did. They've made remarkable progress working with the people of Haiti as we just heard from Francine [Rodd, Director of Peace Corps Haiti]. The work that you have done, the work that you will do, from microenterprise to health care to youth development to agricultural work is very significant and important.

I also understand that a number of Peace Corps volunteers are still in Haiti even after their time has passed because of their commitment to this country and its people. You know that famous Peace Corps slogan: "the toughest job you'll ever love". It seems to me to be the ultimate understatement based on my own observation. I see people who go above and beyond any call of duty day after day, and here in Haiti there could not be a more important mission than the one you have taken on. I hope that your experience here, working side by side with Haitians, will give you not only a real opportunity to make a difference in their lives, but will ultimately make a real difference in your lives. Now it is my great honor to swear in the new Peace Corps volunteers, so let me ask you to raise your right hands and repeat after me:

I do solemnly swear or affirm that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, domestic and foreign, that I take this obligation freely and without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge my duties in the Peace Corps by working with the people of Haiti as partners in friendship and in peace.

Congratulations. You are now truly Peace Corps volunteers.