

Statement Upon Arrival  
Port au Prince, Haiti  
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First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton  
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I am delighted to be in Haiti. As the two oldest independent countries in the hemisphere, we share both a common past and a common future.

I have come to reinforce the strong bonds of family, friendship, and history between our nations and to congratulate the people of Haiti on the road you have taken – rising above oppression and returning democracy and freedom to your country. And, on behalf of my husband and the American people, I want to let you know that we will continue to stand beside you as you overcome the current challenges to democracy, rebuild in the aftermath of Hurricane Georges, and move forward to make sure all Haitians have tools of opportunity – such as health care, jobs, and education – to succeed in the next century.

Since the Hurricane struck Haiti, the thoughts and prayers of the American people have been with you. And I am pleased to have the opportunity to visit the Pernier Fatima region and announce new contributions that the U.S. is making to help you rebuild your agricultural foundation and your entire nation.

I am looking forward to spending time with President and Mrs. Preval; meeting with representatives of civil society; and seeing firsthand the changes that have taken place since democracy was restored four years ago.

In particular, I will visit the Basile Moreau School, a model school, where parents are taking an active role in making sure their children have a strong education and future. I'll visit the Well-Being Committee of Pignon Hospital and learn how the power of microcredit, health care, and community participation is being used to improve the lives of Haitian women and their families. And I will go to the FOSREF clinic and see how family planning and health education are helping to reduce maternal mortality, infant mortality, and HIV/AIDS, especially among young people.

I will be joined by representatives of four private American foundations – George Soros' Open Society Institute, The William H. Gates Foundation, The U.N. Foundation, and the Summit Foundation. They will announce new partnerships with the government of Haiti, Haitian civil society, and the U.S. government to improve health and education throughout Haiti.

I know these are times of both promise and challenge for the people of Haiti. But, just as the U.S. stood beside you as you battled oppression in the past, we will stand with you as you work to build a strong democracy, economy, and civil society for the future.