Extent

108 folders, approximately 1,735 pages

Summary

This collection consists of correspondence between President William J. Clinton and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma from 1994 to January 2001. It includes correspondence between the presidents related to mining accidents, shipping accidents, birthdays, national independence days and other topics. The collection also contains transmittal memos, document receipts, tracking sheets and other administrative paperwork.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2014-0874-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. This Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request was for all correspondence between President William J. Clinton and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma from 1994 to January 2001. Records to be opened include correspondence between the presidents related to mining accidents, shipping accidents, birthdays, national independence days and others. It also includes transmittal memos, document receipts, tracking sheets and other administrative paperwork. As this collection deals largely with issues of foreign policy and national security a large portion of the records are closed for reasons of national security. Leonid Kuchma was named Prime Minister by President Leonid Kravchuk in October 1992. After one year in office, claiming that it was impossible to carry out his duties as Prime Minister without significant political reform, Kuchma resigned on September 9, 1993. His short lived tenure as Prime Minister—October 1992 to September 1993—capped his time in the Verkhovna Rada. Kuchma was first elected as a member of the Communist Party to the Rada in 1990. Using his resignation as Prime Minister as a starting point, in 1994 Kuchma ran against Kravchuk for the Presidency of Ukraine.

He took his message of political reform to the people. Running on a platform that promised political and economic reform as well as promising closer relations with Russia, Kuchma was elected the second President of Ukraine. Kuchma defeated Leonid Kravchuk with 52 percent of the vote. Kuchma was very popular among the ethnic Russian population. His message during the campaign and his popularity among the ethnic Russians worried many that his presidency might further strain the pro-Russian and pro-Independence movements in Ukraine. As Kuchma noted however, closer economic ties and a free trade agreement with Russia were necessary for Ukraine's economic well-being. Under Kuchma's leadership the country quickly acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. He agreed to terms and investment programs from the West that closed the nuclear plant at Chernobyl. Yet, much of his time in office though was spent dealing with Ukraine's poor economic condition. Kuchma was able to negotiate several large international loans and to later renegotiate foreign debt. Rampant corruption, entrenched socialist behavior and beliefs, and lack of capital ultimately stalled financial reform, privatization, and civil rights reforms. However, what some claim to be his largest success, was a series of Constitutional amendments that was hailed by Lucan Way in The New York Times as "moving Ukraine in a more European Direction." In the first years of Kuchma's term of office there were frequent communications between Clinton and Kuchma. These talks were often related to non-proliferation, Chernobyl, and nuclear issues. Toward the end of the Clinton administration the volume of correspondence between Kuchma and Clinton declined. By 2001, Ukraine under Kuchma's leadership was seeing, according to an article in The Economist, a growth rate of 6 percent per year. His reform efforts lowered the rate of inflation to 20 percent from the staggering 377 percent seen five years earlier. However, his time in office was not without controversy. In 2000, Kuchma was accused of ordering the death of a journalist. In the press there were accusations related to Russian oligarchs and business interests. The last correspondence between Clinton and Kuchma was a farewell letter sent only days before Clinton left office.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that were responsive to this request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (Chapter 17 U.S.C.) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, March 2015. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2015-12-08

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to 2014-0874-F:
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Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Records Management
[Kuchma]
9405618 [OA/ID 478]
9405629 [OA/ID 204]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
NSC Records Management
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Electronic Records
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NSC Records Management
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9409213: Talking Points for President Kuchma [Electronic] [OA/ID 222]