Extent

194 folders, approximately 10,010 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records related to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Development, Equality, and Peace (FWCW) held in Beijing, China on September 5 – 14, 1995. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton led the United States' Delegation, and gave a speech on September 5th entitled "Women's Rights Are Human Rights." This collection consists of background papers, memoranda, speech drafts, correspondence, email, cables, newspaper articles, and publications. The collection consists of records regarding individuals who should be selected to represent the United States, the First Lady's attendance, and the Administration's Position concerning sending a U.S. Delegation to the Beijing Conference. The majority of the records in this collection request consist of National Security Council (NSC) cables. These communications, contain read-outs of meetings with the ECOSOC and preparatory committees in advance of the Conference, information about other countries' delegations, discussion of the logistical issues, press materials, reports on Platform for Action implementation, and materials for the Beijing Plus Five meeting

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2012-0094-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. Records responsive to this FOIA case concern the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Development, Equality, and Peace (FWCW) held in Beijing, China on September 5 – 14, 1995. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946 as the principal global intergovernmental body on gender issues, had hosted 3 previous international conferences on women: Mexico in 1975,

Copenhagen in 1980, and Nairobi in 1985. Delegations from over 100 nations attended the conference, as well as the forum for non-governmental organizations that took place in Houairou on August 30 through September 8. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton led the United States' Delegation, and gave a speech on September 5th entitled "Women's Rights Are Human Rights." Preparations for the conference were extensive. Regional committees prepared a draft Declaration and Platform for Action for final approval at the conference. The Platform for Action addressed the status of women in all aspects of life, including education, poverty, violence, and the "girl-child." It communicated a list of strategic objectives for future improvement. The preparation of the Platform of Action was not without controversy. Islamic nations rejected to portions of the draft, claiming that it was incompatible with sharia law. The Vatican publicly disagreed with the United States and other Western nations' positions on birth control and abortion. Further controversy concerned logistical preparations for the Conference and China's records on human rights. There were problems with accrediting NGOs for attendance, and many criticized the Chinese government's decision to relocate the NGO forum from Beijing to the less-convenient city of Houairou. In addition, many conference attendees had difficulty obtaining visas in a timely manner. Follow-up to the conference was as extensive as the preparations, especially in the United States. Immediately before the Conference in August 1995, President Clinton established the President's Interagency Council on Women with Mrs. Clinton as Chair and future Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as Chair to implement the Platform for Action. In 1997, the First Lady, Secretary Albright, and First Lady's Chief of Staff Melanne Verveer established the Vital Voices Initiative, a non-profit, nongovernmental organization focused on empowering women in economics and leadership. As of 2016, Vital Voices has mentored over 15,000 women leaders in 144 countries. Lastly, a special session of the UN General Assembly on June 5 through 9, 2000 hosted the "Women 2000" or "Beijing Plus Five" meeting, a 5 year review of the progress made since Beijing on the implementation of the platform for action. The lone responsive record from the WHORM [White House Office of Records Management] – Alpha Project consists of correspondence between a constituent and President Clinton concerning the composition of the official U.S. Delegation sent to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995. Much of the material from WHORM – Subject File deals with selection of representatives from the United States at the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in the fall of 1995. Prospective members for both the official and public delegations are put forward in letters of

recommendation by U.S. Senators and Representatives as well as the public. The documents make frequent mention of Shirley Joseph, an advocate of women's issues who held leadership positions with Jewish groups, and Marie W. Colton, an outspoken supporter of families in North Carolina for the past two decades, as idea choices. White House Staff and Office files pertaining to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women appear to be concentrated in the First Lady's Office. There are background papers setting the scene, drafts of speeches delivered by Hillary Clinton, correspondence, cables, bios of key persons involved in the meeting, lists, newspaper articles, and publications. Perhaps the key document emerging from the discussions is the Platform for Action which acted as "an agenda for women's empowerment." Critical areas addressed by the paper include how poverty effects women, the accessibility of women to education, training, appropriate health care and nutrition, violence against women, discrimination against girls, women and the environment, economic opportunities for women, the human rights of women, the role played by media in shaping the perception and status of women, institutions and organizations that could be utilized to promote advances made by women, how power and decision making might be shared between men and women at all levels of society, and the effect of peace, conflict resolution, and armed conflict on women. Responsive electronic records are located in the Automated Records Management System (ARMS) Emails. The ARMS Emails, mostly include press materials on topics related to the Beijing Conference. However, a few emails contain correspondence between White House Staff concerning the First Lady's attendance and the Administration's Position concerning sending a U.S. Delegation to the Beijing Conference. Many of the records produced in response to this FOIA request consist of National Security Council (NSC) cables. These communications, most of which originate with the State Department and date from 1993 through 2000, contain read-outs of meetings with the ECOSOC and preparatory committees in advance of the Conference, information about other countries' delegations, discussion of the logistical issues, press materials, reports on Platform for Action implementation, and materials for the Beijing Plus Five meeting. Other responsive electronic records are located in the NSC Email system. These emails include the First Lady's and Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin's remarks at microenterprise events. In addition, the NSC Emails date from 1994 through 2000 and contain draft memos concerning the First Lady's travel to China, correspondence with members of Congress concerning her participation, and information on the implementation of the Platform for Action in other countries. Furthermore, the files of two NSC staffers contain responsive

records. In the Asian Affairs directorate, the files of Sandra Kristoff contain scope and background papers prepared in preparation for Mrs. Clinton’s travel to Beijing and other countries in the region. In the Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs office, Wendy Patten’s records include briefing, press, and preparatory materials for the Beijing Plus Five meeting.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas – Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Alpha Project, Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files, Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files CF, Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: ARMS Emails, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. The White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) contains a variety of series created to organize and track documents and correspondence. The WHORM Subject File was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. In addition, there are WHORM, WHORM Counsel, WHORM (CL), WHORM (OP), WHORM (Too Late), WHORM (Various Offices) and WHORM (Alpha Project) series. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. WHORM files are processed at the document level; whereas, Staff and Office files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area. The Automated Records Management System (ARMS) is a database that contains email records of the Executive Office of the President. This system maintained unclassified Presidential email. The ARMS database is comprised of seven sub-series of email records called "buckets." The buckets generally represent a specific White House office. The buckets are titled: NPR for National Performance Review, OPD for Office

of Policy Development, POTUS for President of the United States, WHO for White House Office, CEA for Council of Economic Advisers, NSC for National Security Council, and Default for emails not associated with an office. The NPR bucket contains email created or received by an individual with a National Performance Review (NPR) White House user account. The OPD bucket contains email created or received by an individual with an Office of Policy Development (OPD) White House user account. The POTUS bucket was designated for email created and received by the President of the United States (POTUS). Please note that President Clinton never used his POTUS White House user account to send the few emails he wrote while in office. The WHO bucket contains email created or received by individual with an Executive Office of the President White House user account not identified as CEA, NPR, or OPD. The CEA bucket contains email created or received by an individual with a Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) White House user account. The NSC bucket contains email created or received by an individual with a National Security Council (NSC) email account. The Default bucket contains email created or received by unknown or un-recognized email accounts. Email found within the Default bucket often includes email created or received by offices or individuals outside the Executive Office of the President. ARMS email are arranged by topic, there-under by bucket, and there-under chronologically by creation date. FOIA 2012-0094-F includes WHORM records from theses subject codes: [CO038] [China] [FG006-01] [White House Office] [FI004] [Budget – Appropriations] [FO006] [International Conferences] [HU010] [Equality] [HU016] [Women] [IT086] [Secretariat, United Nations] [MC] [Meetings – Conferences] [ME002] [Messages] (Sent to Groups/Organizations) [PP005-01] [First Lady]

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, as amended) 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 (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) 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).

Person Names

Clinton, Hillary Rodham

Organization Names

United Nations

Geographic Place

China--Beijing

Topical Subjects

World Conference on Women

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2016. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2016-10-13

Container List

View all digitized files in the National Archives Catalog (NAC)

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2012-0094-F:
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Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Alpha Project
159858 [U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women] [OA/ID 6806]
Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM: Subject File
Category Case Number
CO038 122936
123454
FG006-01 101010 [Chen, Lily Lee – 4th World Conference]
101010 [Chen, Lily Lee – 4th World Conference]
101010 [Gruver, Kelly, & Vokes]
101019 [Chen, Lily Lee – 4th World Conference]
112892 [2] [Fourth World Conference on Women]
130032CU [Joseph, Shirley – 4th World Conference]
130032CU [Joseph, Shirley – 4th World Conference]
130032CU [Schlegell, Abbie von – 4th World Conf.]
130032CU [Joseph, Shirley – 4th World Conference]
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218508
Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM: Subject File – CF
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HU016 125356
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
Chief of Staff
Ickes, Harold
Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China – Women's Initiatives and Outreach, Office of – Agencies, Departments and Offices [OA/ID 9186]
O'Connor, Jennifer
Beijing Women's Conference – USIA [US Information Agency] [OA/ID 8164]
Domestic Policy Council
Rasco, Carol – Meetings, Trips, Events
Briefing on the United Nations Fourth World Conference of Women – October 25, 1995
[OA/ID 7263]
First Lady's Office
Nanau, Daniela
Trip of the First Lady to China, U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women –

September 5-6, 1995 [1] [OA/ID 20213]
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Caputo, Lisa – First Lady's Press Office
Briefing Book of the First Lady – U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women – September 5-6, 1995 [binder] [1] [OA/ID 6059]
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Caputo, Lisa – First Lady's Press Office
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Road to Beijing, LHJ [Ladies Home Journal] (June 1995) [OA/ID 10230]

U.N. 4th World Conference on Women (Sept. 4-5 ‘95) [Folder 1]: [1] [OA/ID 10231]
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Content Available Online