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Department of State
Toasting the Centenary of Costa Rican Democracy
October 27, 1989

President Arias, ladies and gentlemen: I want to offer a few words in celebration of one hundred years of democracy in the Republic of Costa Rica.

This is a national holiday for Costa Rica, but it is a historic milestone we celebrate all across the Americas. For today represents the triumph of a century of Costa Rican work in service of the values that define this hemisphere. A century of free voting in fair elections. A century of respect for human rights. A century of open debate in the press. A century of respect for free men and women empowered to govern their own affairs.

These are the values and practices that give the Americas our own place in history: nations freed from colonial power, individuals free to build societies based on equality of opportunity.

In the last decade, people across the hemisphere have strongly reasserted democratic ideals. And they have succeeded - in nation after nation, courageous democrats have won popular mandates and taken office, marking the end of years or even decades of autocratic rule. Today, many who blazed the democratic path are transferring the people's mandate to elected successors. So we celebrate two things: Costa Rican democracy and the many new democracies that have joined it.

As we celebrate, let's also remember our responsibilities to work and act in solidarity as a family of democracies. Wherever

democracy has been trampled, wherever people do not enjoy the right to act and speak and replace their government without fear through elections, we need to stand up for our common values.

So let's raise a glass to celebrate the democratic values that bind us, and Costa Rica's century of democracy.

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**TOASTING THE CENTENARY OF COSTA RICAN DEMOCRACY
OCTOBER 27, 1989**

PRESIDENT ARIAS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I WANT TO OFFER A FEW WORDS IN CELEBRATION OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA.

THIS IS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY FOR COSTA RICA, BUT IT IS A HISTORIC MILESTONE WE CELEBRATE ALL ACROSS THE AMERICAS. FOR TODAY REPRESENTS THE TRIUMPH OF A CENTURY OF COSTA RICAN WORK IN SERVICE OF THE VALUES THAT DEFINE THIS HEMISPHERE.

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A CENTURY OF FREE VOTING IN FAIR ELECTIONS. A CENTURY OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. A CENTURY OF OPEN DEBATE IN THE PRESS. A CENTURY OF RESPECT FOR FREE MEN AND WOMEN EMPOWERED TO GOVERN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS.

THESE ARE THE VALUES AND PRACTICES THAT GIVE THE AMERICAS OUR OWN PLACE IN HISTORY: NATIONS FREED FROM COLONIAL POWER, INDIVIDUALS FREE TO BUILD SOCIETIES BASED ON EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY.

IN THE LAST DECADE, PEOPLE ACROSS THE HEMISPHERE HAVE STRONGLY REASSERTED DEMOCRATIC IDEALS. AND THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED -- IN NATION AFTER NATION, COURAGEOUS DEMOCRATS HAVE WON POPULAR MANDATES AND TAKEN OFFICE, MARKING THE END OF YEARS OR EVEN DECADES OF AUTOCRATIC RULE. TODAY, MANY WHO BLAZED THE DEMOCRATIC PATH ARE TRANSFERRING THE PEOPLE'S MANDATE TO ELECTED SUCCESSORS.

SO WE CELEBRATE TWO THINGS: COSTA RICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE MANY NEW DEMOCRACIES THAT HAVE JOINED IT.

AS WE CELEBRATE, LET'S ALSO REMEMBER OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO WORK AND ACT IN SOLIDARITY AS A FAMILY OF DEMOCRACIES. WHEREVER DEMOCRACY HAS BEEN TRAMPLED, WHEREVER PEOPLE DO NOT ENJOY THE RIGHT TO ACT AND SPEAK AND REPLACE THEIR GOVERNMENT WITHOUT FEAR THROUGH ELECTIONS, WE NEED TO STAND UP FOR OUR COMMON VALUES.

SO LET'S RAISE A GLASS TO CELEBRATE THE DEMOCRATIC
VALUES THAT BIND US, AND COSTA RICA'S CENTURY OF
DEMOCRACY.

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