

Women's Roundtable and Luncheon

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 6, 1997

EVENT: Womens Roundtable and Luncheon

DATE: Tuesday, May 6, 1997

TIME: 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

LOCATION: Rufino Tamayo Museum

ATTENDEES: Mrs. Zedillo
Mrs. Jones
TBD-10 Prominent Mexican Women

PRESS: Pool Spray

REMARKS: Brief Remarks/Roundtable discussion

SCENARIO: Motorcade will arrive in front of museum. Mrs. Clinton and Mrs. Zedillo will proceed to front entrance and be greeted by Christina Galvez, Museum Director and ?. Mrs. Clinton will have option to hold or proceed directly to Luncheon in the indoor patio. Mrs. Zedillo/Mrs. Jones opens program and introduces Mrs. Zedillo/Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Zedillo/Mrs. Jones makes brief remarks and introduces Mrs. Clinton. Mrs. Clinton makes brief remarks and guests then proceed with luncheon portion of program. Roundtable conversation will take place while luncheon is proceeding. Mrs. Zedillo will thank guests for attending and end program. Following end of program Mrs. Clinton and Mrs. Zedillo will proceed to main entrance and exits to motorcade.

MEXICO: LUNCH WITH MRS. ZEDILLO

Context:

By her own choice, Mrs. Nilda Patricia Velasco de Zedillo, First Lady of Mexico, is not a broadly known public figure. Naturally, people know who she is, but she has preferred to keep a rather low profile, not picking up many of the public charitable and social events that some of her predecessors have supported.

She will be your hostess at lunch May 6, along with a number of prominent Mexican women from various fields of endeavor, to make a total of sixteen. The venue will be the Rufino Tamayo Museum in Chapultepec Park in downtown Mexico City, a private museum created by the family of Rufino Tamayo, one of Mexico's best known abstract artists and a contemporary of Diego Rivera and Freida Kahlo. The museum features a permanent collection of works by such luminaries as Picasso, Miro, Warhol and Henry Moore, as well as by Tamayo himself. They are housed in a strikingly modern building. The museum's director is Christina Galvez.

Objectives:

- o Develop a personal rapport with Mrs. Zedillo.
- o Get the perspective of leading Mexican women on issues of significance to them.

Talking Points:

- o This is a magnificent setting for a discussion that is of great interest to me.
- o I have just come from the Yucatan where I had the opportunity to interact with Mexican women in a rural setting.
- o Mrs. Zedillo has been most gracious to offer me this fascinating opportunity to hear firsthand from Mexico City women issues which you feel are of paramount importance.

**GUEST LIST FOR LUNCHEON
WITH MRS. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON**

Rosalba Cruz

The Queen of recycling for Mexico City, she is the Director of Urban Development programs. She worked on the development of the entire city dump system for Mexico, a project which entailed not only figuring out what to do with the millions of tons of garbage this enormous city produces but also with the entire population of garbage pickers who lived and worked in the dumps. Coaxing those people out of the dumps and into housing, convincing them that education was not only desirable but also possible, and giving them training to be efficient recyclers was an incredibly complex project which has worked out quite well. She has a Master's Degree from the London School of Economics. We sent Rosalba to the U.S. this year on an International Visitor's Project through the United States Information Service.

Teresa Franco

Currently the Director General of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), Tere Franco is an outstanding administrator. Because of the political sensitivity of her job which entails maintaining, protecting, and promoting the vast cultural patrimony of Mexico, Tere, an historian by training, is an expert in working with the bureaucracy in Mexico and around the world. Without her help, we would never have been able to present the stupendous exhibit Olmec Art of ancient Mexico in the National Gallery last year. And, of course, the reciprocal exhibit, Masterpieces of the National Gallery, would have been impossible.

Xóchitl Gálvez

She is an Otomí Indian who had to walk for 3 hours to go to primary school when she was a child. A computer engineer with a specialization in artificial intelligence, she teaches at the Universidad Autónoma de México and is the founder of a private consulting firm which specializes in high tech projects which benefit from computer-assisted technologies. She is also the founder of the Pro Servir Foundation (ProServe Foundation), an organization whose goal is to eradicate malnutrition among indigenous children. She has a master's degree from a U.S. university.

Olivia Barclay Jones

Wife of The Honorable James R. Jones, United States Ambassador to Mexico

Alejandra Lajous

Alejandra Lajous' most interesting past job was as official historian for the de la Madrid administration 1982-88 and the first three years of the Salinas administration. After chronicling two presidents, Lajous went to Channel 11 as Director General. Channel 11 is known for its extensive cultural programming. Lajous has been trying to improve programing, both by purchasing programs from other countries, including the U.S., and by fund-raising to locally produce shows. Lajous is from a family long involved in politics. One sister is an Ambassador; a brother is Director General of the Mexican petroleum company PEMEX; and the other sister is a Senator. Her husband, Roberto Molina Pasquel, was an Eisenhower grantee in 1989.

Claudia Madrazo

Director and founder of La Vaca Independiente (The Independent Cow), an organization which promotes art and culture through education, Claudia Madrazo studied Communications and Museum management. Her big project for last year was publishing a facsimile edition of Frida Kahlo's diaries with an introduction by Carlos Fuentes. This year, her major enterprise is DIA Desarrollo de la Inteligencia a través del Arte (Intellectual Development through Art). DIA is currently working in 20 elementary schools, both public and private.

María Elena Medina Mora

She has a Ph.D. in psychology and is one of Mexico's leading experts in the study of substance abuse, particularly among children. She has participated in many USG programs and has conducted national surveys on drug demand in Mexico under the auspices of the United States Information Service and the Narcotics Assistance Section of the Department of State. She works with the U. S. National Institute on Drug Addiction on a regular basis. She is a former Fulbrighter.

Patricia Olamendi

She is a lawyer who works with six NGO's for the protection of victims' rights. She directs the Center for Assistance to the Victims of Sexual Crimes and Missing Children. She has worked with us in a series of programs on Alternative Dispute Resolution, a concept which is just beginning to gain support here in Mexico.

Beatriz Sánchez Navarro de Pintado

Beatriz is an example of a newer, more assertive woman in Mexico. She is not afraid to ask for money and she has been very successful. As the President of *Adopt a Work of Art* she travels constantly promoting this country-wide project to encourage citizens to appreciate and support their own local cultural treasures. An interesting aspect of the program is that *Adopt a Work of Art* projects are planned to become significant to community development. They provide focal points of local pride and reinforce a positive sense of heritage. They also provide economic benefits by providing employment, as in restoration projects, and subsequent tourism.

María Luisa Barrera de Serna

A biological chemist by training, María Luisa is interested in distance learning and in encouraging volunteerism and the development of the private sector in Mexico. The distance learning projects she works on have been focused on providing current and comprehensive education to the most deprived rural areas of the country. María Luisa works with CEMEFI (Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía - Mexican Center for Philanthropy), an organization which promotes Mira por los Demás (Look out for Others), a campaign modeled on the Give Five program in the U.S. which encourages volunteerism. Just this year, María Luisa and her husband funded two special grants for Masters Degrees in communications studies under the Fulbright program.

Josefa Cuevas de Serrano

The President of the Sociedad Internacional de Valores de Arte Mexicano (International Society for Talent in Mexican Art), an organization which nurtures Mexican performing artists, Pepita is a dedicated and tireless organizer. As a result of her efforts promising Mexican singers receive training and promotion in Mexico and abroad. Because they can find an audience and opportunities here, these outstanding talents will stay in and enhance the cultural richness of Mexico. Her husband is a prominent businessman who is extremely interested in education. We hope to get them interested in supporting the Fulbright program.

Celia Toro

Celia is the Director of the Center for International Studies at the prestigious El Colegio de México. She is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at Stanford University where she studied under the auspices of Fulbright and Ford Foundation scholarships. She is an outstanding scholar who has written several articles on U.S.-Mexico international relations, particularly on drug-trafficking issues. She was a visiting professor at Harvard University's new Center for Latin American Studies during academic year 1994-95. El Colegio is an extremely important institution in Mexico with which the Embassy works extensively co-sponsoring seminars on economics, politics, trade issues, and narco-trafficking topics and on student exchange programs. Because El Colegio is one of the few universities in Mexico with an active American Studies program, it was one of two institutions to receive a USIA donated complete American Studies collection for their library this year. She is married to Dr. Jorge Salmerón, an epidemiologist, and has two small children.

WOMEN'S ISSUES: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In Latin America and the Caribbean, laws limiting or hindering women's opportunities still exist, although many countries have reformed their legal code to eliminate gender bias. Yet in most of the region, women continue to encounter barriers of widespread societal discrimination. Traditional and societal beliefs of the proper role of women tend to limit opportunities for women.

In many Latin American countries which previously lacked specific laws regarding violence against women, including domestic violence, new legislation is now being drafted -- an encouraging trend. Women's groups have begun to use the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women to press for changes in domestic legislation and practices. However, enforcement is still a challenge in many countries; in others, domestic violence is considered to be a private matter and laws and practices reflect this belief. Often the police are reluctant to intervene, reflecting general social attitudes and a lack of gender-sensitivity training for law enforcement officers throughout much of Latin America. This problem only recently has been addressed by programs such as the specialized run-by-women-for-women police stations called elegacias da Mulher in Brazil (a model being adopted in other countries) and by the incorporation of domestic violence training in the basic training of all new police officers in Costa Rica. In many countries where rape is considered a private crime, women bear the responsibility for pressing charges. The courts are often accused of being too lenient.

In the area of political participation, the situation is more hopeful. Although women are significantly under-represented in political office throughout the region, there have been 3 women presidents, 2 vice presidents, and 1 prime minister. Overall, there are no legal restrictions to women's political participation. Through networks of NGOs promoting their participation in civil society, women are overcoming the traditional and socio-economic factors which have kept them out of politics.

In the workplace, women often encounter discrimination in the types of jobs available to them, hiring practices and the wages they are offered. Women's employment is centered in low-status, low wage "traditional occupations." Overall, women earn less than 3/4 of male wages, even when their educational level is equivalent or better. Only about 20% of this difference is explained by differences in education, experience and hours worked. Professional women are pressured to interrupt their careers for child rearing and have difficulty

advancing when they return. Women are also disproportionately represented in the informal sector, earning less and foregoing many benefits found in formal sector jobs.

While educational parity for urban girls is becoming the norm, rural indigenous girls face daunting cultural and language barriers and are often kept away from school to contribute to the family's income, care for siblings, or haul water.

WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

The Invisible Half



INTRODUCTION

Development depends upon the efficient use of resources — natural, financial and human. In Latin American and Caribbean countries, scientists conduct research to find ways to make existing resources go further, and discoveries of new mineral or oil deposits make headlines. Yet there is one resource which many countries do not utilize efficiently: the capabilities, talents and potential contribution of women in Latin America and the Caribbean have been neither fully recognized nor fully developed. ■ This is clearly not a problem unique to Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the International Women's Year in 1975, governments, multilateral agencies and private organizations world-wide have begun to consider development issues related specifically to women's status and roles.¹ The 1975–85 Decade for Women helped focus attention on women, and a framework for women's participation in development was written by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Women represent 50 per cent of the world's population; thus, they should be entitled to the same resources, opportunities and benefits available to men.

■ In Latin America and the Caribbean, a good deal of documentation and analysis of the situation of women has been carried out since the International Women's Year. For example, the 1986 UNFPA conference, "Women, Population and Development in Latin America", held in Uruguay, resulted in a declaration by representatives of 20 countries recommending a variety of measures to promote programmes and decision-making roles for women.² Yet, despite the thousands of words that have been written about the role of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, there remains one overriding

concern: women are still all but invisible in development planning. Further, while more research on women is needed, the data that do exist often are not taken into account by planners or policy-makers.

Investment in human resources depends on high-quality health services, education and employment. This booklet highlights, for those key areas, women's concerns and women's contributions which do not receive adequate attention.

WOMEN AND HEALTH

Today there is a growing consensus that "no country can claim to be advancing if its maternal death rates remain poor."³ Yet, until recently, reducing the maternal mortality rate (the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) has not been included explicitly in the development agenda. This is particularly surprising because the disparity in maternal mortality rates between the developing and the developed regions is much greater than the differences in infant mortality. It is also surprising because many of the maternal deaths could easily be prevented. (See *"Family Planning and the Health of Mothers and Children"* in this series.)

What are the levels of maternal mortality? Difficult as it is to obtain reliable statistics, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 500,000 women per year die of pregnancy-related causes,



ECUADOR: EDUARDO QUINTANA

including abortion. There is wide variation by region. Africa is clearly the worst off: an African woman stands a 1 in 21 chance of dying from complications arising from pregnancy. It has been estimated that a South American woman has a 1 in 73 chance of dying from pregnancy-related causes and a Caribbean woman 1 in 140. However, compare this

TABLE 1
Estimates of Annual Maternal Mortality by Region (latest estimates)

Region	Number of maternal deaths (thousands)	Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)
AFRICA	150	640
NORTH	24	500
WEST	54	700
EAST	46	660
CENTRAL	18	690
SOUTHERN	8	570
ASIA	308	420
WEST	14	340
SOUTH	230	650
SOUTHEAST	52	420
EAST	12	55
LATIN AMERICA	94	270
CENTRAL	9	240
CARIBBEAN	2	220
TROPICAL SOUTH	22	310
TEMPERATE SOUTH	1	110
OCEANIA	2	100
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	494	450
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	6	30
WORLD	500	390

SOURCE: STATS. ANN. *Preventing the Tragedy of Maternal Deaths: A Report on the International Safe Motherhood Conference* (New York: Family Care International, 1987).

with a North American woman's 1 in 6,366 chance or a European woman's 1 in 9,850 chance and the magnitude of the problem becomes clear. (See Table 1.)

Like women everywhere, those in Latin America and the Caribbean have a variety of health concerns. WHO, which has been promoting the goal of "health for all", notes that what distinguishes women's health needs from those

of men is their reproductive role. "Reproductive health" is not limited to childbearing; even women who are spacing pregnancies exactly as they wish are concerned about reproductive tract infections and about sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

Mothers are also important actors in their children's health status. For example, they are largely responsible for their children's immunizations or for carrying out the growth monitoring that is part of recent "child survival" programmes. Often mothers put their children's health and welfare before their own. Equally often, health programmes accept this priority, considering women primarily as guardians of their children; the available data suggest this order of priorities. Women are sometimes lost in these health statistics. As the Pan American Health Organization's director, Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, has observed:

*In order to better understand and address women's specific needs . . . efforts should be made to undertake innovative approaches to analysis, disaggregate data by sex, develop new indicators and make greater use of statistical information in support of planning and programming. It is equally important to change the collective view of women so that they are perceived not only as mothers and health care providers to family and community, but also as human beings with specific needs and aspirations.*⁴

WOMEN AND EDUCATION

Education is perhaps the single strongest influence on women's control of their own future. . . . Education has a powerful effect in its own right . . . for many girls, [it] is their foot in the door of the modern world. . . . With increased confidence and self-esteem, they can begin using the resources of the modern world to make their own choices and improve their lives.⁵

Literacy is quite high in Latin America and the Caribbean in comparison to other developing regions; yet there are marked differences between Latin America and the English-speaking Caribbean and illiteracy rates are higher for women than men in nearly every South American country.

Female illiteracy ranges from a high of 65 per cent in Haiti to a low of four per cent in Cuba. (See Table 2.) In a few countries the differences between male and female rates are large. One observer notes that despite increases in school enrolment for girls, the "belief that it is more important to educate boys than girls, whose destiny is the home and family, still prevails, especially in rural areas".⁶ In comparison, the differences between the sexes in the Caribbean are consistently smaller than in South America. For example, in Cuba 96 per cent of both males and

TABLE 2
Illiteracy Rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, by Sex (latest estimates)

Region/country	Per cent illiterate male/female
CENTRAL AMERICA	13/17
COSTA RICA	6/7
EL SALVADOR	25/31
GUATEMALA	37/53
HONDURAS	39/42
MEXICO	8/12
PANAMA	11/12
TROPICAL SOUTH AMERICA	18/22
BOLIVIA	16/35
BRAZIL	21/24
COLOMBIA	18/18
ECUADOR	15/20
GUYANA	3/5
PARAGUAY	9/15
PERU	9/22
VENEZUELA	12/15
TEMPERATE SOUTH AMERICA	4/5
ARGENTINA	4/5
CHILE	3/4
CARIBBEAN	22/23
CUBA	4/4
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	22/23
HAITI	60/65
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	3/5

NOTE: Regional figures are weighted averages only of the countries listed.

SOURCE: UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

females are literate. In the English-speaking Caribbean, at least 75 per cent of women in each country are literate, and sometimes substantially more.

The relationships between female education, labour force

Having children is safe for most women, but a pregnancy may endanger a woman's health if she is:

- too young
- too old
- has four or more children
- has given birth within the past two years.

Family planning can protect women in these high-risk groups.



HAITI: FAO/E. MATTIOLI

participation and fertility are complex. However, studies do suggest that increased education leads to lower fertility and higher labour force participation. One study of four Latin American countries found that increases in education of women were responsible for 40 to 60 per cent of the decline in fertility in the last ten years.⁷ The World Bank has called female education one of the strongest factors in reducing fertility.⁸

Gradually, women have become a significant proportion of university students in Latin America and the Caribbean. This progress in higher education means that there are more women candidates for trained positions in planning and policy-making. Traditionally, lack of training and preparation was thought to preclude women's recruitment to either private or public occupations dealing with development and social change. However, the large growth in the pool of university-educated women over the past two decades leaves little reason for the exclusion of women from the highest levels of politics and government.

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Participation in either the formal or informal labour force is a reality for most women in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, women's work is still overwhelmingly concentrated in occupations traditionally filled by women (teachers, health workers, secretaries) or jobs that use skills related to women's domestic roles — maids, waitresses and textile workers. For example, women comprise 82 per cent of health workers and 74 per cent of teachers. These occupations can be secure and well-paid, but most are paid at a much lower rate than the similarly skilled "male" jobs. In Brazil in 1980, the average working woman had one-third more education than the average working man, but earned only one-third his wage. One study in Santiago, Chile, found that the higher up the occupational ladder one climbs, the greater the discrepancy by sex.⁹

Measuring women's economic activity is a difficult process, since often they contribute unpaid labour to family farms or enterprises. In Latin America, an average of only 15 to 20 per cent of women are counted as economically active, compared to about 50 per cent of men.¹⁰ World-wide, International Labour Organization (ILO) data show only 28 per cent of women as economically active — a statistic that has been called "a cruel misrepresentation of the actual amount of work that women do".¹¹ (See Table 3 for rates in Latin America and the Caribbean.)

In Latin America and the Caribbean, women's participation in the labour force is



PERU: IDB/C. CONDE

characterized by: (1) an accelerating movement of women into employment in the formal sector, and (2) continuing high rates of female participation outside formal structures, particularly in urban areas. Poor women have

always worked, and censuses from earlier times record high rates of female participation in agriculture. Now, many middle- and upper-class women are entering the labour market. Latin American and Caribbean women's

increasing labour force activity — both in quality and quantity — is visible evidence of significant societal change.

When development plans designed to expand women's earning opportunities involve extra work, they should include relief from current burdens or a compensating income. Sometimes even minor interventions can have a dramatic effect. In rural Peru, for instance, the introduction of grinding mills has helped women save enough time to significantly expand their trading activities. Providing a grinding mill *and* a standpipe might save enough hours of labour that women could undertake a second weeding of the maize or sorghum fields, which has been shown to improve yields by 20 per cent. It may even be that two such simple improvements could have as powerful an effect on agricultural productivity as a full-scale irrigation scheme.¹²

Clearly, the steps to be taken to improve employment opportunities for women depend on one's perception of reality. If one believes that fewer than one-fifth of women in Latin America and the Caribbean are economically productive, the strategies would be different than if one holds the alternative explanation — that women's genuine economic contributions are underestimated. "In a world that puts value almost exclusively on productive activities that enter the cash economy, women's low status may be partially explained by the fact that their work often defies enumeration and classification by conventional measures. . . . A growing number of experts have

TABLE 3
Population Economically Active by Sex, Latin America and the Caribbean (latest estimates)

Country	Per cent economically active	
	Men	Women
CENTRAL AMERICA		
COSTA RICA	51	15
EL SALVADOR	48	24
GUATEMALA	48	8
MEXICO	48	18
PANAMA	46	18
SOUTH AMERICA		
ARGENTINA	55	20
BOLIVIA	49	15
BRAZIL	53	20
CHILE	51	21
ECUADOR	46	12
PARAGUAY	55	14
PERU	47	16
URUGUAY	55	26
VENEZUELA	47	18
CARIBBEAN		
BAHAMAS	47	36
CUBA	49	23
HAITI	52	37
JAMAICA	50	41

SOURCE: International Labour Office, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* (Geneva: ILO, 1987).

called for a reappraisal of the concepts, approaches and practices associated with gathering employment statistics in censuses in order to better account for women's economic activity."¹³

As the use of women's time becomes better studied, experts are recognizing that the distinction between "productive" and "reproductive" activities is less useful than before; today, the contrast can be made between "visible" and "invisible" work by women.¹⁴



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BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP

In Latin America and the Caribbean, as elsewhere, the efforts to ensure the appropriate role of women in development have shifted over time. Originally, many sought to establish special programmes for women, with earmarked resources and even special staff. Next, the focus turned to "integrating women into development", a stage in

which woman-specific activities were shunned in favor of attempts to ensure that women's needs were taken into account by all departments or staff members of an organization or a government.

For the 1990s, however, a new approach has evolved. The goal now is to ensure that gender be consistently considered a central variable in the development equation. Among the strategies proposed to make women's contributions and needs more visible are: (1) obtaining and considering data disaggregated by sex in planning and evaluation; (2) creating new indicators as needed; (3) ensuring that women have a place at decision-making levels (in sufficient numbers to ensure that they can influence the agenda without needing to stand alone for the positions they take); and (4) offering recognition and encouragement to those women and men working on gender issues (rather than denigrating their concerns, as sometimes is the case).

In Latin America, the debt crisis has had an impact on all individuals, but just as it has not affected the rich and the poor in the same way, it has not had an identical impact on men and women. Women in particular have needed to devise increasingly creative "survival strategies" to feed and clothe their families. The "double day" faced by many women (responsibility both within the household and beyond) has grown more burdensome over time. In such a context, each area of an individual woman's life — health and fertility, educational attainment and employment in the formal or informal sector —

affects the quality of life of her family, and, in the aggregate, that of the population as a whole.

If the appropriate changes are to be made, women cannot be seen primarily as carrying out reproductive functions. They are not simply the dependents of men, or the mothers of children, as many programmes and analysts seem to believe. Rather, women must be seen as productive and their work of value to society — whether the official statistics show their contributions or not. They are active agents of social and economic change, not simply passive beneficiaries of special programmes targeted at them.

CONCLUSION

Women have been largely “invisible”, as both creators and beneficiaries of the policy process. The challenge for the 1990s is to discover and recognize women's contributions, and to give them the opportunity to fulfill their potential. In this way the equality of women and the full development of their potential can become a reality.

Review Panel

SUSANNA AGNELLI
Senator and Deputy Minister of
Foreign Affairs for Africa and
Latin America
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Rome, Italy

RUTH NITA BARROW
Ambassador and Permanent
Representative of Barbados to
the United Nations
New York, USA

BLANCA RUTH ESPONDA
Senator
Senate of Mexico
Mexico City, Mexico

MERCEDES PULIDO DE BRICEÑO
Senator
Senate of Venezuela
Caracas, Venezuela

LETICIA R. SHAHANI
Senator
Senate of the Philippines
Manila, Philippines

ERICA G. TERPSTRA
Member of Parliament
The Hague, Netherlands

The IAPG wishes to express its appreciation to Judith Helzner and Barbara O'Hanlon for their work toward preparing this document.

¹Fraser, Arvonne S., *The UN Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987).

²United Nations Fund for Population Activities, *Report of the Conference on Women, Population and Development in Latin America* (Montevideo, Uruguay: UNFPA/Ministry of Education and Culture of Uruguay, 1986).

³Starrs, Ann, *Preventing the Tragedy of Maternal Deaths: A Report on the Safe Motherhood Conference* (New York: Family Care International, 1987).

⁴Pan American Health Organization, *Health of Women in the Americas*, Scientific Publication No. 488 (Washington, D.C.: PAHO, 1985).

⁵Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989* (New York: UNFPA, 1989).

⁶Yudelman, Sally W., *Hopeful Openings* (Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1987).

⁷Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989*.

⁸World Bank, *World Development Report, 1984* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁹Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989*.

¹⁰International Labour Office, *Economically active population* (Geneva: ILO, 1986).

¹¹Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989*.

¹²Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989*.

¹³Chaney, Elsa M., *Women of the World: Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1984).

¹⁴Sadik, Nafis, *The State of World Population 1989*.

**THE TRIP OF THE FIRST LADY
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 5-7, 1997**

EVENT: Visit to The Museo Nacional de Antropologia
(Visit to The National Museum of Anthropology)

DATE: Tuesday, May 6, 1997

TIME: 2:15-3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Museo Nacional de Antropologia, Chapultepec Park, Mexico City

ATTENDEES: Mrs. ZEDILLO (T)

GREETERS: Mr. RAFAEL TOVAR, President, National Council for Culture and Fine Arts
Ms. MARIA TERESA FRANCO, Director, National Institute of Anthropology and History
Mr. FELIPE SOLIS OLGUIN, Director, National Museum of Anthropology

PRESS: Pool

REMARKS: None

SCENARIO:

- HRC is greeted curbside, on ground level by Mr. Tovar, Ms. Franco, and Mr. Olguin (greeters).
- Greeters escort HRC upstairs to 1st level to begin tour.
- Mr. Olguin gives brief history of museum and overview of tour.
- Touring group proceeds to map room for visual briefing of Mexican Anthropological sites.
- Group proceeds to *Tolteca Room*.
- Group proceeds to *Teotihuacan (tay-o-tee-wa-con) Room*.
- Group proceeds to *Mexica (meh-sheeca) Room*.
- Group proceeds to *Maya Room*.
- Group proceeds to Board Room in Executive Offices for HRC's signing of guest book.
- Group traverses foyer and descends stairs to motorcade.
- HRC departs.

note: Staff will be simultaneously given a separate tour of the museum.

MEXICO: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY, MEXICO CITY

Context:

Mexico City's national Museum of Anthropology is one of the world's great museums, and Mexicans are exceptionally proud of everything from its distinctive architecture to its unparalleled collection. The Museum of Anthropology has a close working relationship with many institutions in the United States, especially the Smithsonian's National Gallery of Art in Washington. From last June through October, the Smithsonian was host to a splendid exhibit of Olmec art from Mexico and, to reciprocate, sent the exhibit titled "Masterworks of the U.S. Gallery" to the Museum of Anthropology (it closed last week). Your guide will be the acting Museum Director, Felipe Solis, an archeologist, and he may well be accompanied by senior officials from the National Council for Culture and the National Institute for Anthropology and History.

Objectives:

- o To further demonstrate your interest in Mexico's history and your appreciation for the cultures which existed here in pre-Hispanic times.
- o To enjoy one of the world's finest museums.

Talking Points:

- o In a visit to a museum such as this it is somewhat humbling to realize the breadth and antiquity of Mexican history through its thirty centuries.
- o It is difficult to recognize that there was once a thriving city of perhaps 200,000 people in what is now Mexico City long before any Europeans had dreamt that this hemisphere existed.
- o My visit to Mexico is also driving home to me that the fusion of European and indigenous cultures began in Mexico almost a full century before the first European colonists arrived in what is now the United States.

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BYLINE: BY JACK BROOM

DATELINE: MEXICO CITY

BODY:

Even people who don't consider themselves museum buffs are likely to enjoy a visit to the National Anthropology Museum, home of Mexico's greatest archaeological treasures.

Exhibits in this handsome building in Chapultepec Park present the history and relationship between Mexico's major civilizations, including the Teotihuacans, Toltecs, Aztecs and Mayans.

The success of the 24-year-old museum lies only partly in the artifacts themselves. Equally important is the thoughtful way they are displayed; lighting, positioning and the use of maps, replicas and scale models all play a part.

For example, to see the pyramid city of Teotihuacan, visitors pass under a low arch in front of a full-size reproduction of a 30-foot-tall section of one of the city's major temples.

Carved faces of the gods are painted in the original shades of rose and turquoise. Nearby, a topographical map and 60-foot-long scale model help convey Teotihuacan's size and layout - useful preparation before a visitor actually travels to the ruins, 30 miles northeast of Mexico City.

These days, some of the museum's oldest treasures are also some of its newest: about 120 pieces disappeared in a daring burglary in the early hours of Christmas Day 1985.

For museum officials, the caper was both a shock and an embarrassment: reports indicated the few guards on duty were sleeping off a Christmas Eve revelry.

Some experts pegged the market value of the irreplaceable items at \$ 10 million; others put the estimate much higher. Archaeologists and government leaders feared the pieces may have been spirited from the country and lost forever.

So it was a huge relief, and a salve to Mexico's national ego, when detectives recovered nearly all of the missing items in excellent condition last year. The caper was blamed on two novice thieves about 30 years old who allegedly traded a few pieces for cocaine.

The Seattle Times, October 7, 1990

"We have recovered part of our injured pride," said President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, presiding over a ceremony at the museum after the relics were turned.

Not all of the pieces are yet back on display. For example, a new, more secure exhibit area is being prepared for the jade burial mask of a Mayan ruler.

Throughout the museum, visitors have room to stop and ponder some of larger and more powerful pieces, including the round, 12-ton stone used by the Aztecs as an altar for the sacrifice of human hearts.

The museum's most striking piece is the 12-foot-wide Aztec Calendar Stone weighing 24 tons and displayed vertically on a 5-foot-tall pedestal. Flanking the stone are panels that depict the piece in its original vibrant colors, showing the gods and representations of the seasons.

The major floor of the anthropology museum consists of 12 rooms around a large courtyard. Proceeding counter-clockwise, the visitor first gets an introduction to the concepts of anthropology, then progresses through a series of rooms dedicated to Mexico's major pre-Hispanic cultures.

The second floor depicts the lifestyles of today's major Indian groups in Mexico.

All of the museum's charts and displays are in Spanish, but tours in other languages, including English, are conducted frequently through the day at no charge other than the museum admission price of 10,000 pesos (\$ 3.50). Times of the tours are posted near the museum's ticket booth.

The museum is closed on Mondays, open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on other weekdays, Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is free on Sundays, but foreign-language tours are not conducted.

Another important archaeological museum in Mexico City is the Templo Mayor (Great Temple) in the city center. This temple foundation was excavated after a utility digging crew struck a stone carving on the site six feet underground in 1978.

Walkways lead the visitor over a large, open excavation and then into the museum, where displays explain the significance of the site and its temples, carvings and shrines.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

MEXICO: VISIT TO TEMPLO MAYOR MEXICO CITY

Context:

As Cortez and his conquistadores consolidated their conquest of the island city of Tenochtitlan, which served as the capital of the Aztec empire, all of the religious sites relating to the Aztec empire were destroyed. Among them was the Templo Mayor, or principal temple, of the Aztecs. As it was destroyed and the materials from its buildings used to construct the principal edifices of the new Spanish capital in Mexico, especially the cathedral next door, the site of the principal temple was lost to history until 1978, when a construction project unearthed the Templo Mayor site. Finding such a site constituted a major event in Mexican archaeology and helped define the modern world's understanding of the empire of the Aztecs. The Aztecs were a warrior people and extremely violent in their approach to life. During your visit to the Templo Mayor sites, both outdoors and indoors, you will see ample evidence not only of human sacrifice practices, but also of the bloody conflicts they believed to have taken place among their gods.

Objective:

- o Whether a public or private visit, the objective is to expand your knowledge of and show your interest in the pre-Colombian cultures of which Mexicans are so proud.

Talking Points:

- o I think it is wonderful that in spite of the financial and logistical burdens involved, the people of Mexico have made this special effort to preserve this immensely important historical monument right in the very heart of their nation and this, the world's largest city.

**BACKGROUND ON
COSTA RICA**



U.S. Department of State

Background Notes: Costa Rica, November 1996

Released by the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs.

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Costa Rica

PROFILE

GEOGRAPHY

Area: 51,032 sq. km. (19,652 sq. mi.); about twice the size of the state of Vermont.

Cities: Capital -- San Jose (metropolitan area population of 1.2 million). Other major cities -- Alajuela (250,000), Puntarenas (300,000), Limon (150,000), Cartago (150,000).

Terrain: A rugged, central range separates the eastern and western coastal plains.

Climate: Mild in the central highlands, tropical and subtropical in coastal areas.

PEOPLE (July 1995)

Nationality: Noun and adjective -- Costa Rican(s).

Population: 3.3 million.

Annual growth rate: 2.4%

Ethnic groups: European and some mestizo 94%, African origin 3%, indigenous 1%.

Religion: Roman Catholic approx. 85%, Evangelical Protestant approx. 15%, Others: Less than 1%.

Languages: Spanish, with Jamaican dialect of English spoken around Puerto Limon.

Education: Years compulsory -- 9. Attendance--nearly 100%.

Literacy -- 94%.

Health: Infant mortality rate -- 13/1,000. Life expectancy -- men 72 years, women 76 years.

Work force (1995, 1.2 million): Services -- 45%. Agriculture -- 22%. Industry - 17%. Construction -- 6%. Transportation -- 5%. Banking and finance -- 4%.

GOVERNMENT

Type: Democratic Republic.

Independence: September 15, 1821.

Constitution: November 7, 1949.

Branches: Executive -- President (Head of Government and Chief of State) elected for one four-year term, two Vice Presidents, Cabinet (19 ministers). Legislature -- 57-Deputy unicameral Legislative Assembly elected at four-year intervals. Judicial -- Supreme Court of Justice (22 magistrates elected by Legislative Assembly for renewable eight-year terms).

Subdivisions: Seven provinces, divided into 81 cantons, subdivided into 421 districts.

Political parties: National Liberation Party (PLN), Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC), Democratic Force (FD) Agricultural Union Party of Cartago (PUAC), National Agrarian Party (PAN).

Suffrage: Obligatory at 18.

ECONOMY

GDP (1995) \$9.3 billion.

Real growth rate (1995) 2.5%.

Per capita income (1995): \$2,964.

Natural resources: Hydroelectric power.

Industry (22% of GDP): Products-food processing, textiles and clothing, construction materials, fertilizer, petroleum refining.

Agriculture (19% of GDP): Products -- bananas, coffee, beef, sugarcane, rice, vegetables, ornamental plants and fruits.

Commerce and tourism (40% of GDP): hotels, restaurants, tourist services, banks and insurance.

Foreign Trade (1995): Exports -- \$2.6 billion: bananas, coffee, beef, textiles and clothing, fruits, sugar, flowers and ornamental plants. Major markets -- U.S. 42%, Europe 32%, Central America 16%, Japan 1%.

Imports--\$3.3 billion: machinery, vehicles, consumer goods, chemicals, petroleum products, foods, fertilizer. Major suppliers -- U.S. 48%, Europe 28%, Japan 15%, Central America 5%.

Currency exchange rate: (Aug. 1996) 210 colones = \$1.

U.S.-COSTA RICAN RELATIONS

The United States and Costa Rica have a history of close and friendly relations based on respect for democratic government, human freedoms, and other shared values. During the crisis in Central America in the 1980s, Costa Rica and the United States worked for the restoration of peace and the establishment of democracy on the isthmus. Costa Rica works cooperatively with the United States and other nations in the international fight against narcotics trafficking.

The United States is Costa Rica's most important trading partner, and over 200 American companies produce a variety of goods in Costa Rica. The two countries share growing concerns for the environment and want to use wisely Costa Rica's important tropical resources and prevent environmental degradation.

The United States responded to Costa Rica's economic needs in the 1980s with significant economic and development assistance programs. Through provision of more than \$1.1 billion in assistance, USAID supported Costa Rican efforts to stabilize its economy and broaden and accelerate economic growth through policy reforms and trade liberalization. Assistance initiatives in the 1990s concentrated on democratic policies, modernizing the administration of justice, and sustainable development. The Peace Corps has some 100 volunteers, who provide technical assistance in the areas of environmental education, natural resources, management, small business development, basic business education, urban youth and community education.

As many as 35,000 American private citizens, mostly retirees, reside in the country, and an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 American citizens visit Costa Rica annually.

There have been some vexing issues in the U.S.-Costa Rican relationship, principal among them long-standing expropriation and other U.S. citizen investment disputes, which have hurt Costa Rica's investment climate and produced bilateral tensions. During the first two years of the Figueres government, significant progress has been made in resolving some expropriation cases. However, several important cases remain outstanding. Land invasions from organized squatter groups who target foreign landowners have also occurred, and some have turned violent. The U.S. Government has made clear to Costa Rica its concern that Costa Rican inattention to these issues has allowed U.S. citizens to be threatened and their land taken without timely compensation, and the Figueres government has promised to address the matter.

PRINCIPAL U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIALS

AMB: Peter Jon de Vos

DCM: Richard L. Baltimore III

POL: Mark Davison

ECON: Ben F. Fairfax

COM: Frank Foster

CON: Kathleen M. Daly

ADM: Arnold N. Munoz
RSO: Nace B. Crawford
PAO: Gary McElhiney
IPO: Howard R. Charles
ODR: Gayland Muse
AGR: Charles Bertsch
APHIS Region V: Eric Hoffman
APHIS Region VI: Mark Knez

The U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica is located in Pavas at Boulevard Pavas and Calle 120, San Jose.
Telephone: (220) 39 39.

PEOPLE AND HISTORY

Unlike many of their Central American neighbors, present-day Costa Ricans are largely of European rather than mestizo descent; Spain was the primary country of origin. Few of the native Indians survived European contact; the indigenous population today numbers about 29,000 or 1% of the population. Descendants of 19th-century Jamaican immigrant workers constitute an English-speaking minority and -- at 3% of the population -- number about 96,000.

In 1502, on his fourth and last voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus made the first European landfall in the area. Settlement of Costa Rica began in 1522. For nearly three centuries, Spain administered the region as part of the Captaincy General of Guatemala under a military Governor. The Spanish optimistically called the country "Rich Coast." Finding little gold or other valuable minerals in Costa Rica, however, the Spanish turned to agriculture.

The small landowners' relative poverty, the lack of a large indigenous labor force, the population's ethnic and linguistic homogeneity, and Costa Rica's isolation from the Spanish colonial centers in Mexico and the Andes all contributed to the development of an autonomous and individualistic agrarian society. An egalitarian tradition also arose; this tradition survived the widened class distinctions brought on by the 19th century introduction of banana and coffee cultivation and consequent accumulations of wealth.

In 1821, Costa Rica joined other Central American provinces in a joint declaration of independence from Spain. Although the newly independent provinces formed a Federation, border disputes broke out among them, adding to the region's turbulent history and conditions. Costa Rica's northern Guanacaste Province was annexed from Nicaragua in one such regional dispute. In 1838, long after the Central American Federation ceased to function in practice, Costa Rica formally withdrew and proclaimed itself sovereign.

An era of peaceful democracy in Costa Rica began in 1899 with elections considered the first truly free and honest ones in the country's history. This began a trend continued until today with only two lapses: in 1917-19, Federico Tinoco ruled as a dictator, and, in 1948, Jose Figueres led an armed uprising in the wake of a disputed presidential election.

With more than 2,000 dead, the 44-day civil war resulting from this uprising was the bloodiest event in 20th-century Costa Rican history, but the victorious junta drafted a constitution guaranteeing free elections with universal suffrage and the abolition of the army. Figueres became a national hero, winning the first election under the new constitution in 1953. Since then, Costa Rica has held 10 presidential elections, the latest in 1994.

GOVERNMENT

Costa Rica is a democratic republic with a strong system of constitutional checks and balances. Executive responsibilities are vested in a President, who is the country's center of power. There also are two Vice Presidents and a 19-member Cabinet (that includes one of the Vice Presidents). The President and 57 Legislative Assembly Deputies are elected for four-year terms. A constitutional amendment approved in 1969 limits Presidents and Deputies to one term, although a Deputy may run again for an Assembly seat after sitting out a term.

The electoral process is supervised by an independent Supreme Electoral Tribunal -- a commission of three principal Magistrates and six alternates selected by the Supreme Court of Justice. Judicial power is exercised by the Supreme Court of Justice, composed of 22 Magistrates selected for renewable eight-year terms by the Legislative Assembly, and subsidiary courts. A Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court, established in 1989, reviews the constitutionality of legislation and executive decrees and all habeas corpus warrants.

The country's seven provinces are headed by Governors appointed by the President, but they exercise little power. There are no provincial legislatures. Autonomous state agencies enjoy considerable operational independence; they include the nationalized commercial banks, the state insurance monopoly, and the social security agency. Costa Rica has no military and maintains only domestic police and security forces for internal security.

PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

President: Jose Maria FIGUERES Olsen

Foreign Minister: Fernando NARANJO Villalobos

Ambassador to the United States: Sonia PICADO Sotela

Ambassador to the OAS: Fernando HERRERO

Ambassador to the UN: Fernando BERROCAL

Costa Rica maintains an Embassy in the United States at 2114 S. Street NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-328-6628)

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Costa Rica long has emphasized the development of democracy and respect for human rights. Until recently, the country's political system has contrasted sharply with many of its Central American and Caribbean neighbors; it has steadily developed and maintained democratic institutions and an orderly, constitutional scheme for government succession. Several factors have contributed to this tendency, including enlightened government leaders, comparative prosperity, flexible class lines and educational opportunities that have created a stable middle class, and high social indicators. Also, because Costa Rica has no armed forces, it has avoided the possibility of political intrusiveness by the military that some neighboring countries have experienced.

In the February 1994 elections, center-left National Liberation Party (PLN) candidate Jose Maria Figueres was elected President, succeeding Rafael Angel Calderon of the center-right Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC). Figueres, the son of former President Jose "Don Pepe" Figueres, defeated PUSC rival Miguel Angel Rodriguez in one of the closest elections in Costa Rican history. By winning 28 of 57 seats, the PLN regained a plurality in the legislature -- which in 1990 it had lost for the first time in more than 30 years. The PUSC won 25 seats, while minor parties took the remaining four.

Social Democratic in orientation, the PLN generally has been the dominant party in Costa Rica since 1948, when "Don Pepe" reestablished democracy and abolished the military in the wake of the short-lived but violent civil war. The PUSC is aligned with Christian Democratic and conservative parties in the Western Hemisphere and Europe. Costa Rican governments have tended to alternate between moderately conservative and moderately liberal as the PLN and various anti-PLN coalitions have traded control of the presidency, although in 1974 and 1986, PLN candidates succeeded PLN incumbents.

ECONOMY

Despite trying to remain neutral, Costa Rica was affected adversely by regional political turmoil in the late 1970s and the 1980's. Instability in neighboring Nicaragua and Panama discouraged new investment and tourism in Costa Rica. Many displaced Nicaraguans and Salvadorans sought refuge there, further burdening the country's educational and health facilities. An oil shock and debt crisis also made economic recovery difficult.

Following an economic crisis in the early 1980s, Costa Rica made significant progress toward macroeconomic stability, structural adjustment, and growth through increasingly diversified exports. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth has averaged 5% since 1987, non-traditional exports and tourism have increased rapidly and now account for almost 60% of foreign currency earnings, and official unemployment declined to 4% and inflation, to 10 percent in 1993. A debt-buyback program under the U.S. "Brady Plan" was completed in May 1990, enabling Costa Rica to repurchase 60% of its commercial bank debt and to stabilize its foreign debt servicing.

However, Costa Rica still faces macro-economic problems because of serious fiscal deficits exacerbated by pressures to increase government spending linked to the four-year cycle of presidential, legislative, and local elections. The deficit is compounded by a bloated public sector, unsustainable wage and pensions, increases, mushrooming internal debt, and the lack of effective competition due to remaining public sector monopolies. The fiscal deficit ballooned from 1% of GDP in 1993 to about 8% in 1994, but was cut to 3.8 % in 1995. 1996 should see further progress in cutting the deficit and inflation from over 22% to about 15%. The stabilization program slowed economic growth to 2.5% in 1995 and increased unemployment from 4.2 to 5.2% in 1995.

The Government of Costa Rica announced establishment of a high-level commission to resolve the problem of internal debt, which in 1996 rose to the equivalent of \$2.3 billion in local currency and required about one-third of the government's budget for servicing.

Programs of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have aimed to maintain stability and promote trade and investment liberalization. Such programs have had success; USAID closed its bilateral Costa Rican mission in 1996 since Costa Rica achieved "advancing developing country" status. Further liberalization of Costa Rica's trade and investment regimes, resolution of the internal debt problem and passage of legislation expanding private sector investment in energy, telecommunications, roads, ports, and airports would boost opportunities for foreign and local investors and increase Costa Rica's prosperity.

Costa Rica has sought to widen its economic and diplomatic ties, including outside the region. In April 1994, Costa Rica signed a bilateral free trade agreement with Mexico. The United States and Costa Rica are negotiating a bilateral investment agreement to increase protection for foreign investment. Costa Rica has maintained connections with the European Union, along with the other Central American states, through periodic ministerial consultations. The country is a founding member of the World Trade Organization and has actively participated in the followup to the Summit of the Americas, including working groups to bring about the Free Trade Area of the Americas by the year 2005.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Costa Rica is an active member of the international community and, in 1993, proclaimed its permanent neutrality. Its record on human rights and advocacy of peaceful settlement of disputes give it a weight in world affairs far beyond its size. The country lobbied strenuously for the establishment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and became the first nation to recognize the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Human Rights Court, based in San Jose.

In 1987, then-President Oscar Arias authored a regional peace plan that served as the basis for the Esquipulas Peace Agreement. Arias' efforts earned him the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize. Subsequent agreements, supported by the United States, led to the Nicaraguan election of 1990 and the end of civil war in Nicaragua. Costa Rica also hosted several rounds of negotiations between the Salvadoran Government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), aiding El Salvador's efforts to emerge from civil war and culminating in that country's 1994 free and fair elections. Costa Rica has been a strong proponent of regional arms limitation agreements.

With the establishment of democratically elected governments in all Central American nations by the 1990s, Costa Rica turned its focus from regional conflicts to the pursuit of democratic and economic

development on the isthmus. It was instrumental in drawing Panama into the Central American development process and participated in the multinational Partnership for Democracy and Development in Central America.

Regional political integration has not proven attractive to Costa Rica. Under former President Calderon, the country debated its role in the Central American integration process. Costa Rica has been a cautious partner -- looking for concrete economic ties with its Central American neighbors rather than political institutions -- and has not become a member of the Central American Parliament. Current President Figueres has promoted a higher profile for Costa Rica in regional and international fora. In 1995, Costa Rica gained election as President of the Group of 77 in the United Nations.

Costa Rica broke relations with Cuba in 1961 to protest Cuban support of leftist subversion in Central America and has not renewed formal diplomatic ties with the Castro regime. In 1995, Costa Rica established a migration office in Havana.

Costa Rica strongly backed efforts by the United States to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 940, designed to facilitate the departure of Haiti's de facto authorities from power. The country agreed to contribute civilian medical personnel to the Multinational Force, which restored the democratically elected Government of Haiti in October 1994.

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COSTA RICA: U.S.-COSTA RICAN RELATIONS

Costa Rica is a well-established democracy and friend of the United States, a relationship based on common interests and shared values. The Costa Ricans are strongly pro-American and the public welcome of the President will be extraordinarily warm. President Figueres has made close relations with the United States a key aspect of his international agenda, including participating in the Haiti Multi-National Force. Costa Rica works cooperatively with the United States against narcotics trafficking. Costa Rica differs with the United States on other issues. It maintains diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Its embassy in Israel is in Jerusalem. The GOCR opposes the embargo on Cuba.

We are Costa Rica's most important trading partner, and over 200 American companies produce a variety of goods in Costa Rica. Intel is now building a \$300 million chip assembly plant near San Jose. As many as 35,000 U.S. citizens, mainly retirees, live in Costa Rica. An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 visit annually.

Private United States citizens have several pending disputes with the GOCR arising from property expropriations, GOCR failure to prevent or reverse land takeovers by squatters, or cancellation of licenses. Most expropriation cases are being slowly resolved through arbitration or litigation in the Costa Rican courts. The squatter cases have proved more problematic and could remain an irritant for some time. Costa Rican laws provide inadequate protection for land owners, especially in rural areas, and laws that do apply are often inadequately enforced by undermanned police forces.

Costa Rica joined the EU banana regime, which restricted Latin American sales in Europe and injured U.S. companies, thus guaranteeing itself European market access and share. The United States considered imposing sanctions on Costa Rica for its participation in the regime, but deferred when Costa Rica agreed not to oppose a WTO action against the regime. A WTO dispute settlement panel's preliminary decision found that the EU's regime violated its WTO obligations. As a low-cost producer, Costa Rica would benefit from a more open EU market.

Costa Rica's comparatively high per capita GDP has moved the country into "advanced developing country" status. USAID closed its mission in Costa Rica in August 1996. Some programs begun by USAID are now being managed by the Costa Rica-USA (CRUSA) Foundation. The GOCR is concerned now because the Peace Corps plans to end its program there in mid-1998.

Though U.S. assistance has dropped markedly from the late 1980's, it continues and will be worth approximately \$18 million in FY 1997. Some programs, such as screw-worm eradication, are ongoing. Others are one-time efforts, such as help after Hurricane Cesar devastated the south-west coast in August 1996.

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COSTA RICA: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW

Central America has moved beyond the civil wars of the 1980's that killed hundreds of thousands, drove more from their homes and disrupted economic production and regional integration. Every current leader in the region was installed by a fair and transparent election. Costa Rica abolished its army in 1949 and has enjoyed uninterrupted constitutional democracy since; every other country has now experienced at least two cycles of democratic transfer of power. Center/right parties control the presidencies of Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, center/left regimes rule in Honduras and the Dominican Republic, and centrists have power in Costa Rica and Belize. In all the countries, human rights performance has improved greatly, foreign direct investment is climbing and regional integration has regained momentum.

There have been remarkable changes in the region's militaries, with force levels and budgets shrinking and civilian authorities asserting effective control. Only in Belize does the military budget consume more than two percent of GDP; most are now under one percent. The militaries are also now concentrating on defense of national territory from external threat and leaving most internal law enforcement activities to civilian police forces. One result, however, of a heavy influx of demobilized soldiers into the civilian population, inexperienced new security forces and insufficiently expanding economies is that violent crime in several of these countries has risen dramatically.

Life in the region also remains precarious due to poverty and poor sanitation. Only Costa Rica has a tolerable infant mortality rate at 10.3 per 1,000 live births (the U.S. rate is 7.8). The others range from 34.7 in Belize to 52.2 in Guatemala. All except Costa Rica have an average life expectancy of less than 69 years. Illiteracy remains a drag on the economies; more than 40 percent of the population is illiterate in Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Most of the region's governments have created semi-autonomous human rights ombudsmen. Besides monitoring the conduct of ever more professional security forces and demobilized insurgents, many of these offices are expanding to protect and advocate for the rights of women, children, indigenous groups and workers. Violence against women and children remains a severe problem in the region. Labor problems have also surfaced with the rapid expansion in the number of foreign-owned assembly plants operating in the region. As these human rights offices gain experience, their voices are becoming more and more influential.

COSTA RICA: ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

In Central America, economic conditions vary considerably from country to country, but poverty is a common element: Costa Rica is the most prosperous, with a per capita income of approximately 3,000 dollars per year. Belize is at approximately 2,000 dollars per year while Guatemala, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic have per capita incomes of approximately 1,500 dollars per year. Honduras and Nicaragua are considerably poorer, with per capita incomes of about 500 dollars per year. Only Costa Rica has a tolerable infant mortality rate at 10.3 per 1,000 live births (the U.S. rate is 7.8). The others range from 34.7 in Belize to 52.2 in Guatemala. Illiteracy remains a drag on the economies; more than 40 percent are illiterate in Nicaragua and Guatemala.

The region has a population of over 30 million and a combined gross domestic product of approximately 30 billion. Our exports to the region are almost 7 billion annually -- about the same as our annual exports to Chile and Argentina combined.

Predominantly agricultural, the region's industrialization received an important boost from our Caribbean Basin Initiative. Launched in 1982, this program paved the way for the expansion of the region's Free Trade Zones or "maquilas." Hundreds of thousands of people gained employment in factories producing clothing, shoes, electronics equipment and other products for the U.S. market. During the first ten years of the CBI program, U.S. trade with beneficiary countries grew from 14.6 billion dollars (1984) to 21.99 billion dollars (1993). A very high percentage of the employees in the maquila plants (especially in the textile sector) are women; jobs in the maquila plants provide a source of income that these women lacked before.

Another important source of income for many Central American families is remittances: Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Nicaraguans resident in the United States sent home approximately 1.2 billion dollars to relatives in 1996. Concern about the possible loss of these remittances underlies regional concerns about new, stricter U.S. immigration laws.

The signing of the NAFTA agreement caused Central Americans to worry that maquila businesses would relocate to Mexico; they soon began to push for a unilateral U.S. grant of "NAFTA parity." As it became clear that "parity" could encounter U.S. Congressional opposition, the Central Americans opted to push for a bilateral, reciprocal free trade agreement with the United States. Many believe that the lowering of trade barriers represents an opportunity to allow the prosperity and dynamism of the Free Trade Zones to spread throughout the isthmus.

Free trade is not a panacea; numerous other reforms need to be implemented and the region's education and health care systems need to be significantly improved. Governments must adhere to sound, non-inflationary economic policies and must develop legal systems that protect private property while providing effective mechanisms for the resolution of business disputes.

COSTA RICA: EDUCATION

In Costa Rica and Panama, literacy rates are over 90 percent, with no real differences between literacy rates for women and men. Costa Rica provides a higher portion of its government spending to social programs than any other developing country in the region. As of 1990, 79 percent of students completed primary school and half went on to secondary school.

In four other Central American countries, progress is being made in increasing literacy and improving education. 1990 data show adult literacy rates for El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua of 60 to 70 percent, but in Guatemala the literacy rate for men is 61 percent and only 47 for women. Primary school completion rates were 24 percent in El Salvador, 34 percent in Honduras, 41 percent in Nicaragua, and 36 percent in Guatemala. In the past three years, completion rates for El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have been slightly higher for girls than boys. USAID education programs in these three countries work to improve the quality of schooling and the efficiency of the school systems. In Nicaragua and El Salvador, textbooks have been distributed and teachers trained in more child-centered methods. As a result, children's grade repetition has decreased and learning achievement in Spanish and math has increased. Both governments are working to increase funding for primary schooling and have decentralized governance of schools to local communities. Traditionally in Latin America, a greater percentage of the education budget has gone to university levels and primary schools from central ministries with little or no parent participation.

The USAID program in Honduras has consolidated gains in primary schooling, resulting in an increase in school completion equal to 70 percent of 14 year olds; in 1995, 51,500 girls and 49,300 boys completed primary school. USAID remains involved in alternative programs for dropouts. In 1995, 12,000 women and 10,000 men achieved the equivalent of a fourth grade education; the program will deliver the equivalent of nine grades by 1997. Workforce training resulted in 387 women and 1455 men newly employed.

USAID/Guatemala will continue activities for Mayan girls education and bilingual education. The broader basic education program concludes in 1997. Under this program, an innovative multi-grade program was expanded, along with girls and bilingual programs. Overall completion of third grade increased from 47.4 percent in 1991 to 57 percent; girls grade enrollment in pilot schools increased from 36.1 to 40.6 percent.

In the Dominican Republic, overall reported completion for primary school is still a low 14 percent, but 62 percent complete fourth grade. USAID assistance to education recently concluded, but the EDUCA program will be expanded by the government and other donors. EDUCA developed teacher training programs, new educational materials in math and Spanish, and achievement testing in over 350 schools. EDUCA schools were able to reduce both repetition and dropout rates among students

COSTA RICA: WOMEN'S STATUS

The status of women in Central America and the Dominican Republic still lags behind that of men, but is improving. Throughout the region women are under-represented in government and managerial positions, over-represented among the poor, and subject to domestic violence. Women are nonetheless making strides toward equality, and Central America offers surprises. Costa Rica has a female Vice President, and Nicaragua's previous government had women as President and Vice President.

In all seven countries, the Constitution or the law specifically prohibits discrimination by sex. No legal impediments bar political participation by women. Laws mandating equal pay for equal work, or guaranteeing women the right to own and manage property, are just as widespread. Inequalities still persist, in part because women's status is determined by cultural mores or family structures. (Region wide, women head under a quarter of all households; roughly the same percentage of women are in common-law marriages.) Some legal systems are using innovative means to break down impediments to women's advancement. El Salvador established courts to mediate family disputes; Costa Rica is implementing a three-year plan, based on the Beijing platform, to promote equal opportunity; Nicaragua established six "Women's Commissariats," affiliated with local police stations, to provide women with social and legal help. Nicaragua also hosted the April 24-26 Conference on the Role of Women, to follow up on Summit of the Americas goals.

Incidents of domestic violence and rape are widespread and efforts to combat them uneven. Costa Rica recently approved a Law Against Domestic Violence, and incorporated domestic abuse issues into police training. In El Salvador, 1996 legislation overturned archaic laws mandating the acquittal of rapists who agreed to marry their victims. All countries in the region have ratified the OAS' Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, "Convention of Belem do Para."

Despite widespread legal protections against economic discrimination, women generally earn less than men. Women workers tend to be clustered in low-paying jobs in education, health or the textile sector or agricultural sectors. They work disproportionately in the informal sector, where wages are low, and benefits non-existent. Even so, the growth of maquila industries has given women new sources of income.

Women are still under-represented in government, but they are a growing minority of office holders. All but Guatemala have at least one woman in the cabinet, and a woman heads Guatemala's Congress. In Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic, women hold at least 10 percent of the legislative seats. Guatemalan women play key roles in the commissions implementing the peace accords.

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COSTA RICA: THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

Costa Rica's delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women was led by Alicia Fournier Vargas, Vice-Minister of the Presidency.

Costa Rica joined 90 other governments in announcing "commitments" to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Costa Rica's commitments were to: ensure access of women to high paid jobs, improve the status of female-headed households, improve health services (with special emphasis on the reproductive health of women), review textbooks in order to eliminate gender stereotypes, and mainstream gender in development policies and planning.

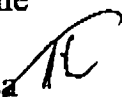
Costa Rica submitted a written statement when the Platform for Action was adopted reaffirming the government's respect for the rule of law, human rights, and the promotion of tolerance. To this end, Costa Rica announced it had ratified all instruments which promote equality of rights and opportunities between men and women. In matters related to sexuality, Costa Rica stated that it understands "any references to women's rights to mean, as in the case of men, the capacity of women or men to achieve and maintain their sexual and reproductive health in a framework of relations of equality and mutual respect." Regarding proposals in the platform for reducing military expenditures and limiting the availability of arms, Costa Rica reiterated its devotion to peace and stated that conflicts and differences need to be resolved through negotiation, dialogue and the quest for consensus, and that resources being spent for weapons would be much better spent on social development.

Costa Rica is currently a member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

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May 2, 1997

TO: Melanne

FROM: Theresa 

SUBJECT: Nicaragua

As background for HRC's meeting with the First Ladies of Central America, this provides a highlight of the meeting I attended in Nicaragua last weekend.

At the Miami Summit in 1994, Violetta Chamorro agreed that Nicaragua would take action on the Summit women's initiative. The Nicaraguans have since been through a change of government and are just now getting the initiative moving. Their plan is to develop a system of indicators that can be used throughout the hemisphere to assess the status of women. This project seems to be designed to secure funding for the Nicaraguan women's institute, which does not seem to have any support from the Foreign Ministry or any other government office. In fact, the Inter American Development Bank is helping to fund this project, the first step of which was last weekend's conference to agree on indicators for countries to report on progress. A number of countries were interested in more focused, action-oriented projects and thought this data collection was duplicative of the work of some UN agencies. We agreed to work with Chile and Argentina, the co-coordinators with Nicaragua of the women's initiative, to get women's issues integrated into the Santiago Summit agenda.

Maria Dolores Aleman, the 24 year old daughter of the widowed President Aleman, keynoted the conference in her role as First Lady. She is likely to mention the conference when she sees you in San Jose. We should encourage her to lend her prestige and support to the Nicaraguan women's institute so that Nicaragua can play a meaningful role in advancing the women's agenda in the Summit process. We can help them in this role, as there are shortfalls in their organizational and resource capacity.

COSTA RICA: POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING

Costa Rica, with a population of 3.6 million, has a fertility rate of approximately 3 children per woman. This is one of the lowest rates in Central America and a significant decrease from the 7.3 births per woman in 1960. Infant mortality in Costa Rica is the lowest in Central America, with a rate of 13 deaths per 1,000 live births. The maternal mortality rate is 26 deaths per 100,000 live births (compared to 12 per 100,000 in the U.S.) There is a high contraceptive prevalence rate, with 76 percent of married women using contraception. The birth control pill is the preferred method while female sterilization and condoms are used at nearly the same rate. Despite these positive statistics, it is anticipated that the population will double within 31 years if population trends remain constant.

While it is not clear why Costa Rica experienced a rapid drop in fertility from 1960 to 1975 (after which time it dropped more slowly), it may be due in part to the fact that female literacy and educational levels are high. Another potentially significant factor is the high level of basic health services that have traditionally been provided by the Government of Costa Rica to its citizens. More than three-fourths of users of modern contraceptive methods acquire them, almost free of charge, from the government public health service.

Costa Rica has a long history of support for population programs. In 1979, a national commission approved the terms of reference for a comprehensive population policy. This policy encompasses health and welfare programs as well as policies related to population distribution. In 1989, a Population Declaration was approved and a chapter on population is included in the present National Development Plan. Costa Rica was a supportive participant in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo and fully supports implementation of the Program of Action.

One of the current challenges facing Costa Rica is adolescent fertility. In 1994, 9 percent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 gave birth each year. The Government is concerned about the medical, economic, and social aspects of adolescent pregnancy, including the high risk of maternal and infant mortality, and the loss of educational and career opportunities. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) currently supports a project in Costa Rica aimed at helping the Government to provide comprehensive health services for adolescents.

In addition to UNFPA-supported programs in Costa Rica, USAID funded a \$1.1 million population sector consolidation project from 1992-1995 which assisted public and private institutions to successfully and responsibly provide effective family planning services, commodities, and information to the Costa Rican population. The World Bank is currently providing \$22 million in loan funds for a health sector reform project which supports the Government's efforts to implement critical policy, institutional, and operational reforms.

COSTA RICA: CHILDREN'S ISSUES

The Central America region has experienced dramatic and mostly positive changes in the health sector over the past 15 years. All countries are in the process of implementing health reform measures including decentralization, alternative financing, quality assurance, and greater use of NGOs and community-based services. However, the health status of the marginalized populations including the rural poor and indigenous groups is still less than optimal.

The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) for Costa Rica is 13 per 1000 live births, with El Salvador having the next lowest IMR (43). The Honduras IMR is 44, followed by Guatemala (51), the Dominican Republic (52), and Nicaragua (53). The leading causes of infant mortality are diarrheal disease and acute respiratory disease/pneumonia.

In Costa Rica and Panama, literacy rates are over 90 percent, with no real differences between literacy rates for women and men. Costa Rica devotes a higher portion of its government spending to social programs than any other developing country in the region. As of 1990, 79 percent of students completed primary school and half went on to secondary school. Adult literacy rates in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua in 1990 were 60 to 70 percent, but in Guatemala the literacy rate for men is 61 percent and only 47 percent for women. Primary school completion rates were 24 percent in El Salvador, 34 percent in Honduras, 41 percent in Nicaragua, and 36 percent in Guatemala. In the past three years, completion rates for El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have been slightly higher for girls than boys. In the Dominican Republic, the overall reported completion rate for primary school is still a low 14 percent, but 62 percent complete fourth grade.

COSTA RICA: HEALTH ISSUES

The Central American and Caribbean region has experienced dramatic, and for the most part, positive changes over the past 15 years in the health sector. Despite improvements reflected in the health statistics of each country, the health status of the marginalized populations, including the rural poor and indigenous populations, is still less than optimal.

The Summit of the Americas' plan of action provides that governments: (1) endorse child and maternal health objectives, including reducing child mortality by one-third and maternal mortality by half (from 1990 levels), reflecting the objectives of the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1994 Narino Accord, and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development; and, (2) develop or update country action plans or programs to focus on reforms to achieve equitable, universal access to a basic package of child and reproductive health interventions.

All countries in the region are to some degree in the process of implementing health reform measures including decentralization, alternative financing schemes, quality assurance, and greater use of NGOs and community-based services for the poor. Summit governments further agreed to use a network to share expertise, information, and experience on health reform efforts in the region.

Despite the drop in infant mortality, thousands of infants die each year before their first birthday, most of them from causes that could be prevented with simple, low-cost technologies. The leading causes of infant mortality are diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infection/pneumonia. Many of these deaths occur among the disadvantaged populations. Costa Rica has the lowest infant mortality rate (IMR) in the region (13 per 1,000 live births), which is comparable to rates in Europe and the U.S. El Salvador's IMR is 43, followed by Honduras (44), Guatemala (51), the Dominican Republic (52), and Nicaragua (53).

The maternal mortality rate (MMR) in Costa Rica is 60 per 100,000 live births, while the other countries' MMR ranges from 150 in Nicaragua to 250 in Guatemala. Again, among the rural poor and indigenous populations these rates may be even higher. Contraceptive prevalence rates run from a low of 31% in Guatemala to 75% in Costa Rica.

The increase in HIV prevalence is a growing concern. Among the high-risk populations, Honduras has a sero-prevalence rate of 20.5%, followed by Guatemala (8.5%), the Dominican Republic (6.2%), El Salvador (6%), and Nicaragua and Costa Rica (1.6%).

COSTA RICA: HUMAN RIGHTS

Central America in 1997 has been transformed from its 1980's image of a region filled with internal conflicts, abusive military and security forces and rampant human rights violations. The final peace accord signed in Guatemala in December ended the region's last armed conflict. All the Central American countries now have democratically-elected governments with strengthened civilian control over the military. All have constitutions which guarantee the basic human rights of their citizens, and all are members of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Serious human rights problems continue to exist in the region, but all of the governments are committed to respecting international human rights norms. The abuses that occur are the result of poverty, inexperienced security forces and government officials, and cultural patterns of violence, rather than of deliberate government policies as in the past. In all countries, local and international human rights organizations operate freely.

The most serious on-going human rights problem is that of impunity, for both common criminals and human rights abusers. Corruption and inefficiency of police and courts mean that prosecutions are rarely carried out in a timely fashion, and convictions are all too few. Escalating criminal violence and strong public dissatisfaction with the slow administration of justice has led to incidents of vigilante justice, particularly in Guatemala. USAID and the Department of Justice are working to strengthen police, public prosecutors' offices, and courts so that criminals and human rights abusers will be prosecuted and convicted in accordance with the laws of each country.

Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua are all dealing with the difficult task of investigating serious human rights abuses which occurred during their internal conflicts. The problem is most acute in Guatemala, where the armed conflict just ended in 1996, and where a UN-monitored Historical Clarification Commission is about to begin its investigative work. El Salvador, which celebrated 5 years of peace on January 16, is working toward full national reconciliation after the Truth Commission reported in 1993 on the many serious human rights violations which occurred during the war. In Honduras, though there was no armed conflict, the government and independent organizations are beginning to investigate the serious human rights abuses which occurred under military governments in the 1980's.

The rights of women, children, and indigenous peoples are guaranteed in the constitutions of Central American countries but not uniformly respected in practice. In each country, however, governments and NGOs are working to improve respect for these rights. Women are assuming increasingly important roles in the region's governments, as are indigenous peoples in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

COSTA RICA: U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

USAID's programs in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic focused on increasing economic growth, strengthening democratic institutions, promoting health and family planning and protecting the environment. Our single largest commitment in the region at this time is our \$260 million, 4-year pledge to support the Guatemalan peace process.

USAID closed its mission in Costa Rica in 1996 after 50 years of development cooperation because of Costa Rica's political stability, social development achievements and its relatively high (\$2150) GNP per capita. Similarly, USAID closed its program in Belize, although both countries participate in USAID's sub-regional programs in free trade, environment and AIDS prevention. Some highlights:

El Salvador: USAID supports implementation of the 1991 Peace Accords, under which 35,000 ex-combatants have received title to land and debt relief and 90% are now using the land productively. USAID helped to distribute 100,000 textbooks and curriculum guides for language and math. Infant and maternal mortality have fallen sharply with the assistance of USAID-funded NGO health networks.

FY97 aid: \$32.3 million.

Guatemala: USAID supports the Peace Accords by building and running the eight demobilization camps and assisting the reincorporation of ex-combatants, refugees and internally displaced through training and access to health and education services. Programs also include support for micro-enterprise development, credit and land titling, the UN Human Rights Observer Mission (MINUGUA), poverty alleviation (especially among the indigenous), improved women's and children's health, and promoting sound natural resources management.

FY97 aid: \$71.5 million.

Honduras: USAID programs have helped 26,000 people receive land titles, increased primary school completion from 50% to 70% of 14-year-olds, assisted 22,000 small farmers to increase their incomes by 50% while reducing annual soil erosion, reduced infant mortality from 85/1000 live births to 42, and increased the percentage of citizens receiving basic municipal services from 17% to 30%.

FY97 aid: \$26.3 million.

Nicaragua: USAID supported the historic 1996 elections through assistance to the electoral council, civic education NGOS and international observation groups. Teacher training and curriculum development have helped to increase completion rates and decrease repetition rates in primary schools. The micro-enterprise program has provided over 40,000 loans totalling \$10 million to 16,600 people (85% women) with a repayment rate of 85%.

FY97 aid: \$25.7 million.

Dominican Republic: USAID promotes health care reform and access to family planning services, potable water and sanitation systems and AIDS prevention. Micro-enterprise development, business and vocational education for the poor, and democracy work through NGOs are other key programs.

FY97 aid: \$12.9 million.

COSTA RICA: ENVIRONMENT

Central America's economic growth and population pressures have had a harmful effect on its environment. Water quality, marine resources, biodiversity, and tropical forests are being threatened by deforestation, coastal zone pollution, urban and industrial pollution, unsound agricultural practices, and both inadequate and unenforced environmental regulations. The region is heavily dependent on its environmental resources for meeting its food security, alleviating poverty, and creating employment opportunities for both current and future generations. Addressing environmental contamination is critical for improving human health as well as for protecting the region's unique and productive ecosystem.

Deforestation is of major concern. Some governments in the region are trying to stop this trend, but development pressures, the use of firewood as cooking fuel, international logging interests, and poor land tenure laws persist. El Salvador is over 90 percent deforested; new satellite images show deforestation on the Mexico/Guatemala border has increased dramatically in the last three years.

KEY POINTS (for Braulio Carillo environmental event)

- o The leaders of the region should be commended for their support of regional efforts established by USAID and other donors: establishing a biological corridor consisting of key protected terrestrial and marine ecosystems, improving environmental policies and standards, improving cross-border coastal resource management, pollution prevention/mitigation, and sustainable energy. The State Department's new regional environmental hub in San Jose will support and augment these efforts when it begins operations this August.
- o Central American leaders should be encouraged to sustain and enhance their participation in the Miami Summit's three sustainable development "partnerships" (sustainable energy use, biodiversity, and pollution prevention), and in the Bolivia Sustainable Development Summit's forestry, agriculture and sustainable cities initiatives.
- o Efforts should be reinforced where possible to: promote environmentally sound private sector investment in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, and key industrial sectors, strengthen public/private partnerships for sustainable development, and fully engage civil society in policy and investment decision-making as well as program implementation.

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COSTA RICA: BACKGROUND ON U.S. EMBASSY

Embassy San Jose is headed by Ambassador Peter de Vos and Deputy Chief of Mission Richard Baltimore. A total of 85 American employees, 146 contractor employees and 90 Foreign Service Nationals work in the embassy; 132 American Embassy dependents live in San Jose. The two most senior women in the Embassy are Consul General Kathleen (Kay) Daly and Peace Corps Director Frieda Martin. In addition, Charlotte Peterson is the Embassy's Cultural Affairs Officer and second in rank in the Embassy's U.S. Information Service.

The U.S. official presence in Costa Rica has decreased in recent years. The U.S. Agency for International Development closed operations in 1996, given Costa Rica's Relative wealth and improvement in social indicators. The Peace Corps mission will close by the end of fiscal year 1998, although a pilot 16-person Urban Youth at Risk ("street children") program will continue and be managed from Managua. In his Earth Day address, Vice President Gore highlighted the San Jose regional environmental hub officer position, which will be established this summer to deal with a variety of regional and global environmental issues. The impending merger of the Embassy's political and economic affairs sections will provide more integrated analysis of transnational themes. Costa Rica's sustained popularity as a tourist destination and retirement site places great demand for high quality consular assistance to travelers in routine and emergency situations.

The current U.S. chancery was completed in 1988. It occupies a large tract of land on Pavas Boulevard in western San Jose. It has over 80,000 square feet with space for all State Department, United States Information Agency, and Foreign Commercial Service offices. The building has space for more than 220 employees, including 117 offices, four conference rooms, three consular waiting areas, lobby, auditorium, and cafeteria. The previous chancery was located in downtown San Jose.

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COSTA RICA: PROTOCOL AND ETIQUETTE

Costa Ricans call themselves "Ticos," which reflects their custom of referring to many things in the diminutive. Costa Rica's high degree of homogeneity is evident in religion, language and many other shared values and customs. Roman Catholicism is the official religion and that of the vast majority, though Protestant evangelism has made inroads in small towns and rural areas. There is respect for other religions. Virtually all Costa Ricans speak Spanish, and the Costa Rican variant is rich in archaic words and expressions, including the use of the word "vos" rather than "tu" as the familiar form of address.

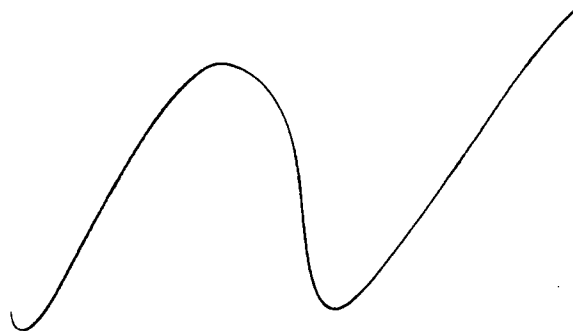
Among Costa Ricans the sense of individual liberty is very strong. They profess the essential equality and dignity of all human beings, they loath arrogance and expect people in high places to be approachable.

Formal education is highly valued, and many Costa Ricans speak some English.

Costa Ricans value courtesy and social ritual, such as the proper ways of greeting and leave-taking. Men shake hands, pat shoulders and often embrace. Men and women embrace and pat shoulders, or touch cheeks and kiss the air.

Most "Ticos" consider the family the cornerstone of society and spend much of their leisure time with relatives. Dress tends to be more formal in Costa Rica than elsewhere in Central America.

In the minds of tradition-oriented "Ticos," individualism and liberty are threatened by the tyranny of the job and the clock. "Hora tica" means perhaps an hour or two after the appointed time; "hora american" or "hora exacta" means "on time."



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**Meet and Greet
with Summit Spouses**

12TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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Hillary Clinton to join other outspoken political wives at meeting

BYLINE: Kathy Lewis, Washington Bureau of The Dallas Morning News

DATELINE: SALVADOR DE BAHIA, Brazil

BODY:

SALVADOR DE BAHIA, Brazil - Hillary Rodham Clinton, a lawyer by profession who has used her current position to champion causes, will not lack soulmates Monday when she attends a conference for first ladies of the Americas.

She'll be joined by Latin American first ladies whose ranks include an urban anthropologist, a family psychologist and a member of parliament.

She'll share the platform with a first lady who fought for domestic violence legislation and one who sits in on Cabinet meetings. And she'll confer with women who've been working to eradicate poverty and defending children's and women's rights.

Some of las primeras damas , as they are called in Spanish-speaking countries, remain more traditional. Some are bridging the gap between what was customary and what has become a new wave of participation.

But others are activist political forces in their own right, scholars and government officials say. Often there are feminist underpinnings to their work.

"It is now much more expected and desired that they play a more major political role," said Jane Janquette, a professor of political science at Occidental College in Los Angeles.

In Brazil, first lady Ruth Cardoso runs the advisory committee for the Solidarity in Community program, which coordinates the government's social programs with private efforts. An urban anthropologist and a Fulbright scholar, she's been an adviser to Feminist Studies magazine.

She and her husband, President Fernando Cardoso, both went on self-imposed political exile during the 1960s and more recently had a commuter marriage so that he could pursue politics and she could pursue her career.

She's appeared on the cover of Veja , the largest news magazine in South America. She's been the link to liberals unhappy that her husband is conducting a centrist presidency.

In Bolivia, Ximena Iturrade de Sanchez de Lozada has crusaded against domestic violence and helped push through Congress a law protecting children

and women.

She also is an advocate for the rights of women in the workplace. She has persuaded schools to teach the youngest students, many of whom are Indian, in the language spoken at home.

Only later do they learn in Spanish, the national language.

Josette Altmann de Figueres of Costa Rica is working to get computers into poor and rural schools and to make sure girls as well as boys learn to use them.

She, too, is conducting a campaign to combat violence against women and children. She's helped put second languages into school curriculum in an attempt to capitalize on job growth in the tourist industry.

According to a spokesman for the Costa Rican Embassy, she sits in on deliberations of the president and his ministers.

In Guyana, 75-year-old Janet Jagan is the parliament's most longstanding member and the editor in chief of the Mirror newspaper, which represents the views of the People's Progressive Party. In that position, she sometimes covers events she attends as first lady.

A native of Chicago, she met her husband while she was in nursing school and he was studying to become a dentist. Part of the political independence struggle from the British in the 1950s and 1960s, she spent six months in jail and helped found the People's Progressive Party.

"I think you are getting a few more like Mrs. Clinton and myself and others who aren't just plain wives," she said in a telephone interview. "I think there's a slight shift from just being ornamental and cutting ribbons, but I think it's a slow process."

Others believe the social activism, long a trademark for Latin American first ladies, is taking a more dramatic turn.

Senior White House counselor Thomas "Mack" McLarty, who helped plan the hemispheric summit of leaders in Miami last December, said the first ladies increasingly are taking on leadership roles.

"I won't say it's the norm, but I think there are more examples than not," he said. "Most are focusing on children and the poor."

They've really made a difference."

Ms. Janquette, who's studied women and politics in South America for two decades, said the Latin American first ladies in some ways have not faced the resistance to their roles that Mrs. Clinton has encountered.

Mrs. Clinton's public policy role became a target during her unsuccessful health care reform fight, and she since has turned her attention largely to women's and children's issues - issues that she has worked on for more than 20 years.

*we
are
all
committed*

"It's easier for them than it is for Hillary Clinton because the traditional gender split in Latin America assumes they will take more interest in social issues," Ms. Janquette said.

"The idea of woman as the source of welfare, as the source of the well-being of society is very much ingrained in the sex division roles in Latin America," she said.

She noted that even Eva Peron of Argentina tried to assume the role of protector of the poor. A charismatic first lady, she was key to winning support for her husband, Juan Peron, and managed dealings with one of his most important bases of support, organized labor.

In Paraguay, where Mrs. Clinton on Monday and Tuesday will attend the conference of first ladies of the Americas, Maria Teresa Carrasco de Wasmosy has worked to help poor rural communities and on projects aimed at preventing teen pregnancy and uterine and breast cancer.

Mrs. Cardoso is the first lady in the hemisphere who most closely resembles Mrs. Clinton, said Francesca Miller, a faculty fellow at the University of California-Davis' Washington Center.

Ms. Miller, author of Latin American Women and the Search for Social Justice, said Mrs. Cardoso is a "feminist, a dynamic intellectual leader in her own country, and it has nothing to do with her being first lady."

"You can see the influence of the last two decades of women's activism in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in the trans-national women's movement," Ms. Miller said.

"You do have these highly educated, outspoken women, some of whom are first ladies who have a feminist perspective," she says.

Even the most traditional first ladies are "deeply involved with the ideas that have come out of the women's movement, in which Latin America has been very active," Ms. Miller said.

Scholars said Mexico's first lady, Nilda Patricia Zedillo, is one who plays a more traditional role, even though she is active and has focused her efforts on education.

Mexico, they said, is a country where first ladies have formally assigned duties. For 50 years, the first ladies in Mexico have had three official positions: working with family development, child protection and cultural history.

Ms. Miller said that Mrs. Zedillo also is patron of a national association of volunteers that helps plan family budgets and distributes nutritional information.

Nowhere has a South American first lady shown a more independent streak than in Peru.

In 1994 Susana Higuchi, a civil engineer, became angry with her husband, President Alberto Fujimori. She said that he hadn't addressed the problem of

poverty and tried to run against him. She was blocked for not having enough petition signatures. The legislature then passed a law banning his family members from seeking office. She accused him of being corrupt. He stripped her of the first lady title, and divorce proceedings commenced.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 23, 1995

UNCLASSIFIEDCOSTA RICA: VISIT WITH MICROENTREPRENEURS
AT THE ESCUELA OMAR DENGÓ

You will join Mrs. Figueres and the other First Ladies at the Omar Dengo School to participate in a roundtable with eight microentrepreneurs from throughout Costa Rica. (Be aware that the First Lady of El Salvador, Mrs. Calderon Sol, participated with you in the recent Washington Microenterprise Summit.) You will also have the opportunity to browse through a display of their products.

The roundtable will be held at the school's community room. You will be received at 9:30 a.m. at the entrance of the School by Mrs. Muni Figueres, Director of External Affairs for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). (Note: Muni Figueres is the sister of Costa Rican President Figueres.) She will act as facilitator for the meeting. You will also be greeted by the school director, the student government leaders and an Honor Guard of fifth and sixth graders. You will be escorted to the school assembly room where you will lead a roundtable discussion (in the presence of other First Ladies) which will last from 9:30 to 10:30 am. You will then be invited to an adjoining room to view a display of the products made by these eight microentrepreneurs and will have the opportunity to talk to each of them until 10:45 am.

You will depart the School following your viewing of the display.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this visit is to give you first hand exposure to Costa Rican microentrepreneurs as part of the roll-out to the afternoon's Regional Consultative Forum on Microenterprise Development.

The microentrepreneurs will include representatives from ADAPTE (Association of Support for Small Workers and Businesses), Fundacion Mujer (Women's Foundation), and Asociacion CREDIMUJER (Association of Credit for Women). Their activities include laundry, radiator workshop, shoemakers, cookie making, seamstress, and doll making. These institutions have received support from both IDB and USAID.

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Costa Rica -
pride in their
small. Take pride
in micro.



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FACT SHEET

WASHINGTON, DC 20523
<http://www.info.usaid.gov>

PRESS OFFICE
(202) 647-4274

97 - 06
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 27, 1997

Contact: Leah Levin or Ann Kittlaus
(202) 647-4274

USAID Supports Economic Empowerment for the World's Poor Through Microfinance

Microenterprise development, providing credit and economic opportunity to the disenfranchised poor, helps ensure that the benefits of economic growth are available to all. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been the lead donor for microenterprise programs since the early 1980s. Its funding currently provides support for more than 150 institutions in 40 countries.

USAID's Microenterprise Initiative launched in 1994 has recently been renewed. The Initiative, affirmed by members of congress, has been effective in ensuring the growth of microenterprise activities that bring poor disadvantaged and marginalized groups into the mainstream of an expanding economy. USAID has targeted \$120 million a year for 1996 and 1997 for microenterprise projects.

Microfinance is an integral element of microenterprise development because it allows poor individuals, often without collateral or an avenue to commercial banks, access to financial services. These loans will be used to finance entrepreneurial activities such as establishing a vending cart or buying equipment for a small manufacturing operation.

USAID-supported microenterprise projects have had tremendous success throughout the world.

- Technical assistance of \$15 million from USAID to Bank Rakyat in Indonesia (BRI) in the early 1980's has lead to the development of a profitable state owned bank that serves the poor. Today BRI attracts savings from 13 million Indonesians and lends to more than 2 million entrepreneurs.
- USAID contributed \$5.9 million for the start-up investment in BancoSol in Bolivia. Today the bank reaches over 60,000 clients and has no need for further subsidy.
- In cooperation with the government and private institutions, USAID's work in Uganda to increase financial services to rural businesses will reach over 10,000 people.
- In South Africa, Get Ahead, with early support from USAID, has reached 10,000 clients.
- USAID microenterprise funding of \$6 million in Ecuador supports programs that will be able to reach 138,000 clients between 1996-99.
- In Nicaragua, USAID support for ACCION, Catholic Relief Services, Opportunity International, FINCA and Pro Mujer will result in the provision of financial services for 51,000 clients of whom 80 percent are women.

-- more --

Frequently less than \$300, microloans are sometimes guaranteed by peer lending groups. Insured by the borrower's community, the repayment rate is often better than 95 percent.

Overall, approximately two thirds of the clients of micro-enterprise institutions supported by USAID are women. Beginning with a loan of as little as \$50, poor women can begin the process of escaping from poverty. With time and on-going access to financial services, clients may expand their economic activities, educate their children or invest in housing.

Microenterprise is rapidly emerging as an important tool in our efforts to alleviate poverty for some people in our own country. In the past few years the microenterprise movement has grown to include over 400 institutions across the United States.

USAID plays a leadership role with other donors. It was key in establishing a multi-donor group of microenterprise organizations, the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest, which uses proven methods as standards for micro-finance programs.

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST LADY'S INVOLVEMENT IN PROMOTING MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

- 1986 Mrs. Clinton and then-Governor Clinton met with Mohammed Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, in Arkansas to discuss the relevance of the model of the Grameen Bank to rural Arkansas communities.
- 1988 Mrs. Clinton was involved in the creation of, and served on the Board of, the Southern Development Bank Corporation and its non-profit affiliate, the Good Faith Fund -- one of the first rural microenterprise funds in the United States. Modeled after the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, the Good Faith Fund provides small loans, training and technical assistance to low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs in rural communities in Arkansas. Several U.S. foundations, through program-related investments, have partnered with the Good Faith Fund.
- March, 1995 Mrs. Clinton visited the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India and the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh to highlight these important microcredit programs enabling poor women to become self-sufficient.
- May 14, 1995 Mrs. Clinton's op-ed in the Washington Post, "Investing in Sisterhood," underscores how microcredit helps women overcome poverty.
- July 26, 1995 Mrs. Clinton visited Mi Casa, a program in Denver, Colorado promoting microenterprise development, that has received support from the Small Business Administration. She also spoke to the Women's Foundation of Colorado Conference on microenterprise as a tool of opportunity.
- August 28, 1995 President Clinton directed the Secretary of the Treasury to develop an awards program to honor excellence in microenterprise development, and to coordinate all microenterprise programs within the U.S. government. This was announced as part of the U.S. commitments to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.
- September 5, 1995 Mrs. Clinton spoke in Beijing, China, at the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) panel discussion on "Women's Economic Empowerment." Other panelists included Ela Bhatt of India's SEWA, and Mohammed Yunus of the Grameen Bank.
- October 12, 1995 Mrs. Clinton visited a FINCA bank, "Mothers United," in Nicaragua (which was subsequently re-named "Mothers United *with Hillary*"), and an Accion microenterprise project, "PenaSol," in Santiago, Chile. Both projects serve very poor women and have been successful in providing economic opportunity.

June 26, 1995	Mrs. Clinton was the keynote speaker at the RESULTS Dinner in Washington, DC honoring Dr. Yunus.
November 8, 1995	Mrs. Clinton spoke at the "Beyond Beijing" World Bank Conference, where she highlighted microcredit and economic opportunity. The World Bank has committed itself to microenterprise lending, which is of great importance to women's economic development.
March 19, 1996	Mrs. Clinton spoke about the importance of microenterprise in development to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.
May 2, 1996	Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Rubin announced the details of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development via video to the Association for Enterprise Opportunity Conference in Rhode Island.
September 16, 1996	Mrs. Clinton spoke at the USAID "Lessons Without Borders" Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, where she described how lessons learned through international assistance can be applied to solve problems at home.
December 3, 1996	Mrs. Clinton visited BancoSol in La Paz, Bolivia -- Bolivia's largest commercial bank and the world's only commercial bank dedicated solely to micro lending. (The BancoSol borrowing group that Mrs. Clinton met with re-named itself the "Hillary" group in honor of her.)
January 30, 1997	The President, joined by First Lady and Secretary Rubin, presented the Inaugural Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development at the White House.
February 3, 1997	Mrs. Clinton keynoted at the International Micro Credit Summit in Washington, D.C.
February 3, 1997	Mrs. Clinton visited a Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) borrowing group in Washington, DC.
March 21, 1997	Mrs. Clinton met with borrowers from the Zambuko Trust Microfinance Program, a microenterprise institution supporting 4,000 Zimbabwean businesses -- 75% of them owned by women.
March 29, 1997	Mrs. Clinton visited a FINCA microenterprise borrowing group outside Kampala, Uganda.

**THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY
TO SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA
MAY 7-9, 1997**

Event: Roundtable/Luncheon/Video on 16 vulnerable communities in Costa Rica

Date: May 8, 1997

Location: Pueblo Antiguo

Time: 11:15-1:30 p.m.

Participants: Mrs. Clinton, Mrs. Figueres, ????

Greeters: Dr. Roberto Ortiz, President Board of Directors, Asociacion Pro Hospital de Ninos, and three Executive Board Members

Press: Pool

Scenario: The First Lady arrives and is met curbside by Dr. Roberto Ortiz, and ???. The First Lady, Dr. Ortiz, ??, and the Central American First Ladies move to the Congress Building and take seats at roundtable. Mrs. Figueres moves to podium, makes remarks with slides (10 min), and returns to her seat. A video (10 min) is shown on the 16 most vulnerable communities in Costa Rica. Headsets will be provided for simultaneous translation. After the conclusion of the video, a roundtable discussion begins. Mrs. Figueres makes introductory remarks and welcomes a discussion (30 min). At the conclusion of the discussion, Mrs. Figueres makes brief closing remarks. Pool press will cover the event. The First Lady and the Central American First Ladies move to the Market Building for lunch (40 people). En route to lunch, there will be three displays (butterfly farming, hydroponic vegetable growing, and indigenous persons that make souvenirs) that the First Ladies will briefly view. The First Ladies take their seats and lunch is served (55 min). At the beginning of lunch, Mrs. Figueres will make a toast. After lunch there will be a ten minute break. The First Ladies move back to the Congress Building and take their seats at the table. Minister of Education ?? makes remarks (10 min) and take their seats. Representatives of the Discovery Channel make remarks (7 min) and take their seats. Mrs. Figueres makes remarks (5 min) and returns to her seat. A video entitled "Education for the New Century" is shown (6 min). Headsets will be provided for simultaneous translation. Mrs. Figueres makes brief closing remarks (2 min). Pool press will cover the event. The First Ladies depart.

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COSTA RICA: LUNCHEON WITH CENTRAL AMERICAN FIRST LADIES

Your multilateral activities will include a luncheon with the First Ladies of Central America and the Dominican Republic. You will arrive via motorcade at Pueblo Antiguo (Old Town), where you will be greeted by Rolando Quiros, First Lady Josette Figueres' Chief of Staff. He will escort you inside Pueblo Antiguo's Congress building, where Mrs. Figueres will introduce you to the Central American and Dominican First Ladies.

All the First Ladies will exit the building for a group photo and then re-enter the building for a presentation on the "16 Most Vulnerable Communities in Costa Rica" program. A 15-20 minute discussion on the program will follow.

Following the program, the First Ladies will walk about 150 yards to Pueblo Antiguo's Market building, site of the luncheon. During the luncheon, there will be a presentation on the Discovery Channel's "Education For the New Century" project. Following the luncheon, you will depart via motorcade for an IDB-sponsored Microcredit Conference.

Background

Earthquakes have destroyed many of Costa Rica's older buildings, leaving little record of San Jose's pre-20th century history. Pueblo Antiguo is a re-creation of late 19th century San Jose and is located within the National Amusement Park. Profits from the park's operations help to maintain the National Children's Hospital. To date, the park has generated almost \$4.5 million for this purpose.

The "16 Most Vulnerable Communities" Program is part of the Figueres administration's National Plan to Combat Poverty and is managed by First Lady Figueres' office. The presentation will cover criteria for selecting participating communities and implementation efforts. According to Mrs. Figueres' office, the program has already benefited more than 300,000 persons.

"The Education For the New Century" project is a cooperative effort between the Discovery Channel and a local cable television outlet, Cable Color. The project provides schools with the necessary equipment to use Discovery Channel educational programs as a supplement to their basic fourth, fifth and sixth grade curriculums.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 16, 1995

**REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AT THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF WIVES OF HEADS OF STATE AND OF
GOVERNMENTS OF THE AMERICAS
ASUNCION, PARAGUAY**

MRS. CLINTON: I am privileged to have the opportunity to represent my country, the United States, for the first time at this Fifth Conference of First Ladies from the Western Hemisphere. It is also a great honor for me to be here in Paraguay with all of you.

We have gathered together to discuss the futures of women and children in all of our countries. Whether we live in North, Central, or South America or the Caribbean region, we are united in our belief that women everywhere share common aspirations and concerns.

Yet, as we meet here in this beautiful hall this evening, we also know that a vast reservoir of human potential is now being wasted across the Americas.

No nation in our hemisphere can say that all of its children are fed, clothed, housed, schooled, and raised by loving parents. No nation in our hemisphere can say that all of its women are treated with dignity, respect, and given the chance to fulfill their God-given potentials. And no nation can say that each and every family within its borders is healthy, strong, and stable.

Our world, as we know, is far from perfect. But even though enormous challenges remain, we have come here hopeful about our future. Hopeful because, somewhere in our hemisphere right now, a baby in a local health clinic is being immunized against a serious disease. . . a little girl is going to school and is learning to read and write . . . a woman is taking out a small loan from a neighborhood bank that will enable her to start her own business in her home. We know that every problem we face in our hemisphere is being solved somewhere in our region at this very moment.

We are also hopeful because of the progress made at last year's Summit of the Americas in Miami, at the United Nations Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen earlier this year, and more recently at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on

Women in Beijing. I think it is very fitting that we meet after those three historic gatherings, which drew world attention to the plight of women and children and, in so doing, to the plight of families as well.

Since Miami, we have seen cooperation grow among our nations, and our political leaders. The Summit not only recognized every nation's duty to invest in its people, but also the special role that girls and women play in the economic and social development of the Western Hemisphere.

That theme was reiterated again in Copenhagen, which focused on the alleviation of poverty as an essential factor in political, social and economic progress.

Many of us also attended last month's women's conference in Beijing, where it was again made clear that democracy and prosperity cannot be attained or sustained in countries that do not value women as full and equal partners in society.

The conferences in Miami, Copenhagen and Beijing showed the world that issues involving children and women are not secondary issues. They are keys to building democratic institutions, strengthening market economies, and achieving social justice.

They are also among the hardest issues we face.

That is why the agreement reached in Miami last year was an historic first for countries of this hemisphere. For the first time, there was universal recognition that no nation can compete in the global economy if half its population cannot read or write, cannot find a job, or cannot rise out of poverty.

And that is why it is also heartening that, despite assurances from skeptics that nothing would be accomplished in Beijing, more than 180 nations endorsed a platform for action that lays out specific ways to expand the rights and opportunities of women around the world.

This is particularly critical today, given the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the skilled and the unskilled.

Those among us who enjoy the opportunities of education, health care, jobs, credit, legal and political rights are flourishing in the new global economy. Those without such opportunities are lagging farther and farther behind. And more often than not, those lagging behind are women and poor children.

This trend, if it continues, threatens to undermine the very institutions we are seeking to uphold: strong families, strong economies, and strong democracies. All will be in jeopardy if women

continue to be denied the opportunities they need to thrive and compete in the new century.

So, what must change?

First, values and attitudes.

In our everyday lives, we must begin to respect the dignity of each person, no matter where that person lives or what he or she looks like. To do that, we must be willing to overcome many assumptions, presumptions, prejudices and prejudgments.

Because, to truly respect a child means to respect every child in every family, boy or girl. To respect a child means to give that child the love, attention, and discipline he or she needs to grow up with confidence and competence. To respect a child means to nurture that child with the health care and schooling that he or she needs to get the right start in life.

Every time we dismiss the potential of a child because of skin color, parental income, or family background, we betray our own futures.

We must also appreciate the contributions of every woman, instead of pigeon-holing and categorizing women in ways that limit their potential. To truly respect a woman means to respect and protect her human rights; it means to respect the choices she makes for herself and her family; and it means to value the experience she brings to all facets of life.

Second, institutions must change, and so must the ways we go about our everyday business.

If programs and policies have outlived their usefulness, we should admit that they no longer solve the problems they were meant to solve. We must fix programs that don't work with reforms that are efficient and inexpensive. And we must insist that institutions -- whether government, schools, or health care systems -- overcome bureaucratic intransigence and put people first.

We must also take advantage of the many innovative programs that do exist throughout our hemisphere. Prior to arriving in Paraguay today, I was in Brasilia, where President and Mrs. Cardoso told me about Brazil's efforts to improve the quality of primary education.

I then traveled on to Salvador da Bahia, where an extraordinary effort is underway to channel the potential and energy of thousands of street children. One program I saw was a circus in which the performers were children, some as young as eight, who had been recruited off the streets where they lived.

They were not being trained for circus jobs; their performances were merely a vehicle for learning the value of discipline, teamwork, and hard work. Along the way, these children develop confidence, self-esteem, and pride in their accomplishments. Part of a program called Project Axe, they also receive schooling and vocational training, as well as counseling to reunite them with their families.

I asked one 15-year-old boy, who had been with the project since it began five years ago, whether it had made a difference in his life. If not for the project, he said, "I would be dead or in prison now."

Programs like this one, which receive support from the public and private sectors and some international organizations, can be replicated widely. But that requires us to share information, exchange ideas, discuss honestly our successes and failures, and learn as much as we can from each other.

Government has a vital role in all of this. But government is only effective if it listens to the voices of the people it serves, instead of making decisions based on political convenience or whim. And government must be held accountable for meeting human needs.

At the same time, government cannot address every problem alone. We must not look on government as a panacea, but as an able partner of business, non-governmental organizations, and other private institutions committed to investing in the promise of every person, including those who are poor, disadvantaged, and politically powerless. And one of the best things government can do is to make it easier for outside groups, non-governmental groups, to do the work they are willing to do.

Finally, as societies, we must be willing to move beyond inertia to action. And all of us -- individuals and institutions -- must heed that call to action. We must start by taking responsibility within our own families and then spreading that responsibility to the communities in which we live.

Every segment of society has a stake in this issue. And every segment of society can affect positive change.

Schools, for example, can be more flexible in responding to the needs of their students, young and old.

A few days ago, in Santiago, Mrs. Frei took me to a school that embodies the Chilean commitment to building an educational system for the future. I saw boys and girls busy working on computers hooked up to the Internet.

I learned from the Minister of Education that schools may begin to keep their doors open on Saturdays and Sundays to

accommodate the children of working parents who have no alternatives for child care, and for children who wish to acquire new skills for themselves.

I saw that Chile has not been content to stick with old methods that do not work. The government and people of that country are devising new ways of training teachers, involving parents and communities. All of this is happening now in many countries throughout the Americas and more can happen if we are willing to learn from each other's experiences.

Heeding the call to action also means that financial institutions must serve all people, even if they are poor, live in remote areas, or are women. How much more evidence do we need that women are a good credit risk? I have seen the proof myself at the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, where the poorest of the poor in the world have transformed entire villages by taking out small loans for cows, rickshaws, and other items they use to earn an income.

I have even seen it in my own country, where poor women at a project called Mi Casa, in Denver, Colorado, have banded together to take out small loans to help themselves. And they told me very, very directly how difficult it is for women even in the United States to have access to credit. One woman said: "Too many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks."

But all over this hemisphere, women are overcoming these obstacles. In Nicaragua, which I visited at the beginning of my trip, I saw how hard President Chamorro has worked to strengthen democratic institutions and promote a market economy. And I met thirty women from a very poor barrio in Managua who run a bank in their neighborhood, borrowing small sums of money to start their own businesses, to start a bakery, to make mosquito netting, to be a seamstress.

Not only had these women organized themselves to improve their own circumstances, they were also improving the circumstances of their families and communities.

Furthermore, they have, like every bank I have ever visited, a high loan repayment rate. In that particular neighborhood bank, the repayment rate was 100 percent. And from what I know about banking, that would be the envy of many commercial lenders.

Individual men and women need to change attitudes and then act, just as every branch of society.

Businesses can initiate policies, such as flexible work schedules, child care, and the use of modern technology, that enable employees to perform well on the job and continue to fulfill their family obligations. Businesses also can value women by paying women equal salaries for

equal work with their men employees.

The media can assume greater responsibility for the values it transmits by avoiding negative advertising and television programming that sensationalizes violence and glorifies the exploitation and degradation of women and children.

At this conference, we will examine these issues, and we will focus specifically on what can be done to address the pressing health and education of women and children.

We will discuss initiatives to ensure the elimination of diseases that primarily affect women and children, reduce maternal mortality and provide comprehensive health care to women throughout their lifetimes, including family planning. We will talk about what every nation must do to ensure that girls are guaranteed the right to an education and that all citizens acquire the knowledge and skills they will all need in the new global economy.

And we will explore ways to end the problem of domestic violence, which has destroyed the lives of too many women and their families in every country represented here.

I would like to make one final point about our agenda. Because we are talking about the issues that matter most in the lives of women and children does not mean we are not talking about the lives of men and boys.

When I was in Nicaragua, I noticed billboards along the side of the road. They showed the face of a crying child with the caption: "My father has left the home." The problem of the absent father is as tragic as the problem of the undervalued mother and wife. It is a problem that, in the United States, we are urgently trying to address.

If, as a hemisphere, we truly care about strong families, strong communities, and strong societies, we have to recognize that men and women can and must complement each other inside and outside of the home. We should not be at opposite poles; we should be partners in a common enterprise for the good of all of us, and particularly our children.

Because of the roles that the women here and many of you in this hall have, we know we can help initiate the changes that must take place if we ever want to realize the great potential of this hemisphere.

Like the women I have met all over this hemisphere in Canada, in my country, in Mexico, in Nicaragua, in Chile, in Brazil and here in Paraguay, we come together to pool our experiences and

ideas to improve conditions for our individual families as well as our national family and the family of nations.

I was not present at the earlier conferences, but I want to thank and applaud all of the women who took part in those conferences and who have moved this agenda forward. I was privileged to host our meeting in Miami and I look forward to the work ahead of us. It is the most exciting and challenging work any of us can imagine or be engaged in. And it is work in which we can make a difference.

Thank you very much.

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As delivered

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR THE PLENARY OF THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF
FIRST LADIES OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE AMERICAS
DECEMBER 4, 1996**

I know we all join in expressing our appreciation to everyone who has had anything to do in putting on this Conference and the inaugural ceremony and reception last night. Over the next several days, this conference will work on an ambitious agenda that builds on our work in Paraguay last year and focuses on challenges facing women and children of the Americas on the eve of a new century.

This year's conference allows us the opportunity to measure the progress achieved since Miami and to focus on concrete ways to advance this agenda for sustainable development.

Let me report on three areas of concern that were discussed in Miami and Asuncion: the elimination of measles from our hemisphere, education reform, and reducing the rate of maternal mortality.

First, we can all be encouraged by the Pan American Health Organization's report on measles, which shows a 63 per cent reduction of confirmed cases of measles since 1995 and a 99 per cent decrease since 1990. These statistics are evidence of how close we are coming to the goal of eliminating measles from the Western hemisphere by the year 2000. Such progress was possible as we have already heard because of the efforts of many of the people in this room to raise awareness in your own countries and to launch regional Pan American Health Organization campaigns across the hemisphere.

A year ago, I pledged that the United States government would support these efforts. On June 27, the United States Agency for International Development signed an \$8 million regional grant with PAHO to help achieve the measles elimination goal. Over the next several years, USAID's missions around the Hemisphere will make their own contributions to the measles campaign.

Our second concern was to promote education reform so that by 2010 every school-age child in our hemisphere would have completed a primary education.

While we all recognize that education is a gateway to our individual and collective progress and prosperity, our region continues to lag far behind countries with comparable GDPs in the percentage of children who complete primary school. In the Western Hemisphere, barely half of the children entering primary school complete the sixth grade. Girls from indigenous and minority communities, including in my own country, are least likely to secure the education they need.

And we must be a voice for change on this critical issue.

Last year I spoke about PERA, the new Partnership for Education Revitalization in the Americas. Based on commitments made by our nations in Miami, PERA will create networks that allow for the exchange of information on programs and policies that have been successful in expanding educational opportunities. I am pleased that the United States' contribution of \$3.7 million over five years launched this initiative. The United States has now made an additional commitment to nearly double that contribution over the next five years.

Other steps are underway. The Inter-American Dialogue, perhaps the premier private center of analysis and exchange on hemispheric affairs, has agreed to serve as the PERA secretariat. Their members include some of the hemisphere's most prominent citizens. With us today is Peter Hakim, President of the InterAmerican Dialogue. He will be available during the education working group sessions to answer questions and explain further how this partnership will work.

Mr. Hakim and the Dialogue will work closely with the Government of Mexico, which volunteered as part of the follow-up to the Miami Summit to coordinate initiatives on education.

National education teams already are promoting educational reform efforts in six countries--Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Peru and Nicaragua. Two others, Venezuela and Ecuador, recently joined this group. PERA will focus on issues of decentralization, school finance, quality and equity and will be available to support education reform teams throughout the region.

There are encouraging signs of progress: New and exciting bilingual programs in Guatemala and Bolivia; the EDUCO programs in El Salvador and the Dominican Republic; preschool programs in Costa Rica and Jamaica. PERA will compile the best and most successful cases of education reform so that we can learn from each other's experiences.

Promoting education reform is critical to strengthening democratic institutions and values throughout the Americas. Democracy cannot thrive or survive without educated citizens; and in a fast-paced, highly competitive global economy, an educated populace is vital to every nation and every region's economic growth. That is why the commitment to universal primary education made in Miami is so important.

Let me also add that girls must be part of any education equation. Girls must not be left on the margins, consigned to lives of poverty and ignorance. It does them no good. It does their families no good. It does their nations no good. Educating girls is the best single investment we can make if we care about building strong democracies with vibrant free market economies.

I am also heartened that civic education is on the agenda of this conference. Teaching people -- especially women and girls -- about democratic values and the importance of their participation in

the political process is critical to sustaining democracy across our hemisphere and giving women a voice in determining their own future.

The Civitas Panamericana Conference held in Argentina in September brought together members of government, the media, civic organizations and the private sector -- all of whom share a responsibility for conveying the tenets and values of democracy to the larger public. Encouraging women to get involved in the political life of their countries will strengthen civic culture and move us closer to our democratic ideals.

Finally, we face a serious challenge of reducing maternal mortality in the Americas.

More than 23,000 women will die this year in our hemisphere from causes related to pregnancy. Five women die every hour. Since we have been in this room, between 10 and 15 women have died. The numbers are unacceptable. Without access to voluntary family planning, women too often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortions that can result in death.

Voluntary family planning enables women to make informed decisions about their own health and their reproductive options. As Bolivia has ably demonstrated, educating women about their own health -- about the benefits of spacing births, breastfeeding, good nutrition, prenatal and post partum visits and safe deliveries -- not only reduces maternal mortality and strengthens families, it also decreases the number of abortions.

Emergency obstetric care, now lacking in too many places in our hemisphere, is also vital. The United States, through USAID, will sign in a few moments a \$2.25 million regional grant to the Pan American Health Organization specifically aimed at improving emergency obstetric care. This grant is part of the Maternal Mortality Reduction Initiative that was adopted in Miami at the Summit of the Americas. The Mother Care project and the Quality Assurance project will provide additional support to nongovernmental organizations and to governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to improve responses to obstetric emergencies and the quality of care at community clinics as well as to teach the public about the need for prenatal and postnatal treatment and safe delivery.

These are among the initiatives and accomplishments that the people in this room can be proud of. We have worked hard and the work is beginning to pay off in improved conditions for women, children and families of our region. I am confident that if this work continues and if all of us are committed to raising our voices on behalf of the importance of improving the lives of women and girls in the Hemisphere, that we will continue to achieve positive results. I am also confident that if the media continues to cover these issues, as it has begun to do around our region, that the public will understand the mission that this conference represents and will join with all of us in making sure that the initiatives that we have adopted will be carried out.

Thank you all for your commitment and for the work and for the achievement that have already been accomplished. Thank you very much.

**THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY
TO SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA
MAY 7-9, 1997**

Event: Microcredit speech

Date: May 8, 1997

Location: El Greco Ballroom A, Hotel San Jose Palacio

Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Participants: Mrs. Clinton, Mrs. Figueres, ??

Greeters: ?, gift ?

Press: Pool

Scenario: **The First Lady** arrives and is met by ?. **The First Lady** and ? enter stage right, move to head table and take their seats. Muni Figueres makes introductory remarks (5 min) and returns to seat. Mrs. Josette Altmann de Figueres makes welcoming remarks (5 min) and returns to seat. Mark Schneider, USAID, makes remarks (5 min) and returns to seat. Enrique Iglesias, President of IDB, makes remarks (5 min) and returns to seat. Indigenous female, male youth, and adult female give testimonials (15 min). Muni Figueres intros **The First Lady** (? min). **The First Lady** delivers speech (20 min) and departs stage right. Press Pool will cover the event.

Note: The head table will be on stage and will seat 12? people. There will be simultaneous translation.

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COSTA RICA: KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO THE
REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

You will join Mrs. Figueres and the other First Ladies of Central America (from Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic) at the Hotel San Jose Palacio to open a two-day meeting of microentrepreneurs and microenterprise development implementing organizations, sponsored by USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Government of Costa Rica.

Mrs. Figueres will escort you to the stage and will deliver the opening address to the plenary audience (300-400 people), followed by brief remarks by USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America Mark Schneider and IDB President Enrique Iglesias. You will then hear three short testimonials from microentrepreneurs from some of countries listed above before you deliver your keynote address.

You will depart the hotel following your address.

Background

The purpose of this forum is to allow for the exchange of views among 50-70 microentrepreneurs from across the region and to convey the message to the region's political leadership that microenterprise development programs are effective in alleviating poverty because they create permanent jobs at an extremely low cost per job, and that more support is needed to consolidate gains and hasten further growth of the sector. The event is viewed as a natural follow-up to the February 1997 Microenterprise Summit and directly supportive of the Plan of Action of Summit of the Americas.

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Following the opening session, the conference will feature presentations from the hemisphere's premier microenterprise practitioners, including Maria Otero (Accion International), Rupert Scofield (FINCA) and others. USAID and the IDB have brought practitioner delegations from Costa Rica and the other Central American countries and the Dominican Republic for this event. The conference will include smaller, participatory sessions which will focus on the needs of the individual microentrepreneurs as well as the issues facing implementing organizations as they work to expand access and improve the workings of micro-credit organizations throughout the region. A report of the forum's recommendations will be compiled by USAID and IDB and shared with the appropriate government and non-governmental officials of each participating country.

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Begin → I must be valued.

There are essential elements. But we I want to talk about today is micro.

AGENDA**FORO REGIONAL CONSULTIVO SOBRE MICROEMPRESA:
LECCIONES Y OPORTUNIDADES**

**8 Y 9 DE MAYO DE 1997
HOTEL SAN JOSE PALACIO
SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA**

JUEVES, 8 DE MAYO DE 1997

11:00 am INSCRIPCION

12:00 noon ALMUERZO

2:00 pm APERTURA

- **Presentación: Muni Figueres, Asesora, Oficina de Relaciones Externas, BID**
- **Bienvénida: Josette Altmann de Figueres, Primera Dama de Costa Rica**
- **Oradores: Mark Schneider, Administrador Adjunto para América latina y el Caribe, USAID
Enrique Iglesias, Presidente, BID**
- **Testimonios:**
 - Indigenous Female (Guatemala, Accion) -- to be confirmed*
 - Male Youth (Costa Rica) -- to be confirmed*
 - Adult Female (El Salvador, Financiera Calpia) -- to be confirmed*

2:35 pm , NOTA INAUGURAL

Hillary Rodham Clinton, Primera Dama de los Estados Unidos

3:00 pm RECESO

3:30 pm TEMAS INSTITUCIONALES EN EL MICROFINANCIAMIENTO

BID

- **Moderador: Marguerite S. Berger, Jefe, Unidad de Microempresa,**
- **Introducción: Mark Schneider, Administrador Adjunto para América Latina y el Caribe, USAID**

3:40 pm ● Expositor: Maria Otero, Vice Presidente Ejecutivo, Acción Internacional

4:10 pm Preguntas y Respuestas

**4:30 pm ● Panelistas: Alex Silva, Gerente, Profund
Rupert Scofield, Director Ejecutivo, FINCA**

International

5:00 pm Preguntas y Respuestas

5:30 pm CLAUSURA

6:00 pm RECEPCION

VIERNES, 9 DE MAYO DE 1997

8:30 am SESION PLENARIA

BID

- **Moderator: Marguerite S. Berger, Jefe, Unidad de Microempresa,**
- **Talleres Simultáneos de Trabajo (20-25 participantes en cada uno)**
Taller A: El Crecimiento de su Microempresa
Taller B: La Microempresa y el Desarrollo Comunitario
Taller C: Productos Financieros y Servicios para el Microempresario

10:30 am RECESO

11:00 am RESUMEN DE LA SESION PLENARIA

12:00 noon CIERRE

12:15 pm ALMUERZO

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 3, 1997

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT THE MICROCREDIT SUMMIT

Sheraton Washington Hotel
Washington, D.C.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. Thank you, choir, that was wonderful. I got to listen to you as I stood outside. I am thrilled to see such a turnout for this summit, which is one of the most important gatherings that we could have anywhere in our world, to talk about what is possible for raising the sights and aspirations of people, giving them the tools of opportunity, expanding access to credit and creating conditions in which men, women and children will be able to make for themselves better lives.

I'm very grateful to all who have made this summit possible, particularly to the co-chairs, to the heads of state who are gathered, to other distinguished guests, to the Results Educational Fund, to many of the private corporations and other foundations that have helped to sponsor this important gathering.

This is truly an historic occasion. Microfinance is a subject that is near and dear to all of our hearts who are gathered here. And this first global summit on microcredit offers an unprecedented opportunity for us to draw attention to the successes of microcredit in developing countries, as well as in applications in advanced economies around the world.

By bringing together experts from every continent we will be able to learn from each other's challenges and achievements, and apply those lessons within our own borders. I hope that this conference will engender new understanding of microcredit and its potential to transform the lives of individuals, their families, their communities and their nations.

Although it is called "microcredit," this is a macro idea. This is a big idea, an idea with vast potential. Whether we are talking about a rural area in South Asia or an inner-city in the United States, microcredit is an invaluable tool in alleviating poverty, promoting self-sufficiency and stimulating economic activity in some of the world's most destitute and disadvantaged communities.

I first heard about microcredit more than a decade ago when my husband, then the governor of Arkansas, and I were involved in looking for ways to create economic opportunity in the poorest sections of one of the poorer states in the United States. We had heard about the work of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and about the work that the South Shore Bank in Chicago. And we reached out to representatives of both to explain to us how this idea of very small amounts of credit could make such a difference.

I remember well when we met with Muhammed Yunus in the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock in 1986. We sat there and listened as he told us how the idea which he had had as an economics Ph.D. and then a teacher back in his home in Bangladesh began to be put into practice. He offered advice as the project in Arkansas got off the ground. Within a few years we, too, could see how the fruits of the Good Faith Fund, as the project in Arkansas was called, were beginning to take root.

It was so contrary to conventional thinking about finance and economic development. And, yet, before our eyes and based on reports from Bangladesh and India and Chicago and elsewhere, we knew something important was happening that had escaped the notice of many who worked in development, of many who were in finance departments of governments. And both my husband and I were determined that the concept of microcredit would have universal relevance. We looked for ways to apply microcredit in America, taking the best of the principles and values that it represented, but making it sure that it could be put into practice in different settings.

Now, more than 10 years later, we can look around this room, from one end to the other, and appreciate the power of Muhammed Yunus' vision. And we can celebrate the courage and dedication it has taken on the part of all of you today -- pioneers in microfinance, lenders in microcredit enterprises, representatives of government and private business and foundations and grass-roots community organizations from all over the world -- the courage that it took to come and understand how the conventional wisdom about poor people and economic opportunity was no longer adequate. (Applause.)

To really understand the significance of this summit one must recognize that you are here because you have broken a paradigm, you have gotten out of the conventional box of thinking about the poor, about economic opportunity, about the partnership between the public and private sector. It is this type of unconventional thinking that we need more of in our world today, to address the problems that all of us confront. (Applause.)

I know those of us here understand that microcredit is a tool -- not the only tool, but we believe an important tool available to promote economic and social development. We have seen with our own eyes in the last several decades how the global economic revolution has transformed lives, many for the better. People with opportunities in places that never thought or dreamed they could see clean water, roads, their children attending school, access to health care.

And yet, we also know that global economic change has not only made winners, it has

*He reminded us to
on our idea*

*Yunus -
wisdom -
noble -
1997*

made losers as well. And part of our challenge is how do we harness these vast forces of change for the benefit of all people, how do we ensure that no matter where one lives, no matter what race or ethnic background, no matter whether a man or a woman. It is the individual human being willing to work hard who will be given the opportunity if that person takes responsibility to seek and find a better life for themselves.

That is why this idea is important not only on its own merits and that we should work to spread it, be honest about what it can do, make changes where necessary, recognize that it has limitations. But the idea is not only important for what it is, but for what it represents when we put it into the context of the global economic changes that are sweeping through all of our countries. (Applause.)

The United States has long supported microcredit overseas through USAID. And I am pleased that the United States will continue to support microcredit programs and that I hope more American citizens will recognize how important it is to support the economic aspirations of our friends and neighbors around the globe. And one of the ways we will attempt to deliver that message is to demonstrate here within our own borders how microcredit can change the lives of Americans.

Indeed, we are beginning to spread microenterprise throughout the United States. It has to be tailored to our particular economic and social circumstances. And so it is by the very nature of the communities which it is working in going to be diverse -- offering different kinds of loans, resources and business assistance.

But I am pleased that the President, working with the Secretary of the Treasury whom you will hear from later, have recognized the important role that microcredit will play in economic development throughout our country in helping people who are currently on welfare in the United States find opportunities for their own economic self-sufficiency. And to that end, just this last week, the President and Secretary Rubin presented the first Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development. The awards recognize efforts within our country to extend credit and economic opportunity to Americans who otherwise lack the chance to become economically self-sufficient.

The awards also underscore the ripple effect that microcredit projects can create -- not only in lifting individuals out of poverty and moving mothers from welfare to work, but in creating jobs, promoting businesses and building capital in depressed areas.

The United States is also promoting microcredit through the Small Business Administration's Microloan Program -- a public-private partnership which has already awarded \$70 million in grants to nonprofit organizations with nearly half of the loans granted going to women. The loans range from \$125 to \$25,000.

Because of the promise that microcredit holds in the United States, the President announced last week that he is requesting substantial increases in federal funding for the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund. His budget calls for a \$1 billion increase

Did we get this?

over the next five years. (Applause.)

As I said last week at the White House when we were celebrating microcredit, there are millions of people in our country as there are millions of people in all the nearly 100 countries represented here who are brimming with initiative and desire to take responsibility and to work hard. But they need what I call the tools of opportunity, and one of those tools is access to credit. For too long, many people -- not only the poorest of the poor, but working people and others -- have had to turn to the lenders in the community that extract great price and cost for the money that they give. Others have been shut out completely from any kind of access to credit. And the result has not only been to depress their opportunities, but to depress that of those in their families and in their communities.

Later today, I will visit a microcredit project right here in Washington, D.C. -- one of the FINCA USA projects. I spent time with a FINCA borrowing group in Managua, Nicaragua, and I'm looking forward to hearing from the borrowers in this group here in Washington -- how that model is working for them.

What we are finding is that modest loans are transforming lives, reclaiming villages and rural areas and cities from decay and decline, and helping to reduce the number of people living in substandard conditions or extreme poverty.

I have seen that with my own eyes. Many of you are veterans of microcredit who are here, but others of you have come for the first time to learn how this concept can be translated and transplanted where you live. And others of you in the press are finding this a new idea, something you had not really focused on before. And still others in government and private business are looking for ways to help the economic development of people in the communities that you serve. And I want to take just a few minutes to visualize why I am such an admirer and supporter of microcredit; why I believe that it has such great potential.

So I brought with me some of the pictures that I have had taken as I have traveled to various continents and countries looking at microcredit efforts, and if I could I'd like to show them to you as I talk a little bit more about why they make such an important difference.

I want to start with a picture from India, and those of you who are familiar with SEWA -- and I believe that Ela Bhatt is here and will be speaking -- know how important the Self-Employed Women's Association has been. This group has made it possible for very poor women to learn about finance, to borrow money, to be part of a bank, to save money. And when I visited I met with hundreds of women, some of whom had walked for 12 or 15 hours to come to meet with me, to tell me what those initial small loans meant. And I want to emphasize that it was not just stories about what the loans bought and what they were able to do with the loans, it was the entire sense of self-worth and potential that those loans created in the women that made the biggest impression on me.

Women stood up and said that they had been vegetable vendors in the markets and had been abused by police officers, others of authority, with no place to turn to try to keep their

businesses going when times were difficult. They told me of working on their family farms, eking out a living in very hard soil with little equipment and little support. And yet, woman after woman stood up and said to me that since they had become members of the Self-Employed Women's Association, they were no longer afraid. They were not afraid to speak up for themselves, to find their place in their family and their village, to help contribute to the income that made it possible for them to think of sending a child to school or having a child get the health care that child needed.

Many of you will find and be able to relate the same kinds of experiences that I have had. And I hope that as we talk about microcredit and as we look at the physical manifestations of loan, ledgers, and I have reviewed -- of businesses that have been started, of milk cows that have been bought, we will also not forget that you are seeding those people with a dream and a hope that they will be functioning members of society whose children's lives will be better.

I've also seen firsthand what happens in Bangladesh, and for anyone interested in microcredit you know that it is a journey to the Grameen Bank that is often part of the learning experience because of the longtime efforts that have been undertaken there. When I visited with a group of women in a village outside of Jasore, I realized that I was visiting a Hindu village, and my schedule did not permit me to go down the road further to visit a Muslim village. And I wanted to see women from both communities who were participating with Grameen. The women in the Muslim village came to the Hindu village, the first time there had ever been such participation together. Never had there been a meeting like that.

And I listened as 150 Hindu women and 150 Muslim women told me how their lives had been transformed by virtue of earning income. These women had lived much harder lives than any I could even imagine, and yet they were filled with hope about their future. And one of the reasons is that Grameen doesn't just extend credit, as many of you know. It tries to put the women and the men who are borrowers not only in borrowing groups for credit purposes, but to help support one another in solidarity, to build stronger families and communities.

Each person who joins the bank has to abide by 16 decisions or principles that range from the mundane such as "we shall build and use pit latrines," to the much more difficult to explain and understand -- "we shall not inflict injustice on anyone; neither will we allow anyone to do so," or "we shall always keep our children and the environment clean." There is even one principle against dowry, which is extraordinary considering the attitudes in many of those communities about the proper role of women and certainly the importance of dowry.

As each woman waits her turn to get a loan, she knows she cannot borrow money until the woman before her has repaid her loan. So there is a built-in incentive to support each other's enterprises.

I saw women making steel and concrete beams they can sell to other women who use them to build houses with loans from Grameen and I visited such a house. So a whole self-sustaining market is created within one village.

Grameen also in Bangladesh attempts to work with children to change attitudes about what is possible for them. Here there was a skit performed in which some of the young children, young boys and girls, were talking about attitudes that were held about education, and in particular, whether or not girls should be educated as well as boys. And by performing that skit, they were serving notice that they understood there was another way, another idea of what could be possible for them.

And so when you go to Bangladesh, and you see, as many of you have, what Grameen means, just like what the Self-Employed Women's Association means in the lives of these women, their husbands, their families, it makes it clear that we're talking about not only economic transformation, but social transformation as well. (Applause.)

Some months later, I visited a microenterprise project in Denver, Colorado, here in the United States. In this case women, many of them Hispanic Americans, received career counseling and vocational training, and entrepreneurial technical assistance. It is provided by a group called Mi Casa. And here, the women were explaining to me what it meant for them to finally be taken seriously. Many had been on welfare or were just off welfare, and they were looking for an opportunity to take the skills that they had acquired and turn them into income.

Many of those women were good bakers, good seamstresses. They could make alterations. They could provide food for small restaurants. But they didn't, as we hear so often, have access to credit to get started. One woman said to me something I have never forgotten, when she described to me what it was like trying to go to her local bank. She did not have any traditional collateral, but she was a hard worker. She's always worked for other people. She had a good product to sell. But she was turned away because the amount of money that it would have taken for the bank to process her loan was not, in the bank's eyes, worth the investment. And she said, too many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks. (Applause.) And one of the hopes I have is that conventional banking will understand that there is an economic opportunity, a market niche for those willing to service this community.

I certainly was impressed by that when I was in Managua, Nicaragua, meeting with women in a borrowing group shortly after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the platform of action included a commitment microcredit. And as I have said, and as the President's said, much of the work that we are doing in the United States to advance microcredit is in part a fulfillment of our responsibilities under that platform of action. (Applause.)

I went here to the weekly meeting of the FINCA Group and there were about 30 women who described how they had received small loans to start neighborhood bakeries, seamstress shops -- one was making mosquito netting; one was selling auto parts door to door. I was surprised and very excited when several of the women not only gave me their products, but also asked me what I had been doing in India because some of them had seen on television some pictures of my trip to the Self-Employed Women's Association. They wanted to know what the women there were spending their money on and what businesses they were starting. And I felt

that there was an opportunity for this to be literally a global movement, with people learning from each other and supporting each other. And this is exactly what this summit means to do.

I've also been impressed by the work I've seen in Santiago, Chile, where community bank relies on peer networks to promote and sustain local microbusinesses. Here in a local market I met the vendors who were showing their commitment to the bank by putting up awnings in matching blue and yellow to demonstrate that they were part of microenterprise.

Most memorable to me was a woman who told me that as a seamstress she could not compete with the larger factories, and yet she knew there was a market for her work because she had many people who had come and asked her to make something for them but she did not have the capacity to do so. With a small loan, she was able to buy a high-speed sewing machine and replace her old, antiquated one. She said that when she got that new sewing machine she felt like a caged bird set free. And that is a good way to describe how many of the people I have met seem to feel when given the opportunity.

I saw that again firsthand recently in La Paz, when I met with borrowers at Banco Sol and had a chance to visit the bank itself -- a physical place that is dedicated to microcredit. And the people there were very proud of what they had accomplished. And the United States is pleased that this bank, now the largest bank in Bolivia, was initially supported through a loan from USAID. It is the first commercial in the world completely dedicated to microlending.

The default rate is extremely low, about 2.2 percent; and the repayment rate, obviously, extremely high. I often say to my banker friends that if they had customers like these people, who paid off their loans at 95, 97, 98 percent, they would be very happy. And I think if more banks understood -- (applause) -- the tenacity, the commitment, the entrepreneurial spirit of people like these who are given a chance to help themselves, we would go a long way in not only extending credit, but in eliminating many of the unfortunate stereotypes about people who are poor. (Applause.)

Anyone who has worked with microcredit or seen its impact around the world as I have will testify that those stereotypes are just plain wrong. Most people who are eligible for microcredit around the world work as hard as they know how, from sunup to sundown, and sometimes for many hours before and beyond. And yet, too often, those of us in positions of *I want a world where a child I can watch +* influence or authority or power dismiss them. We seem to have a belief that if they are poor, *poor* they are meant to be poor and will always remain poor. Yet many of us come from families, *work +* generations back who themselves were poor, and through hard work and sometimes lucky breaks *get* and opportunities an extended helping hand, we were able to climb our own way out of poverty *paid* and to have the benefits that that gave us and our children. *for it.*

These microcredit projects are proof of what we can unleash if we invest in the economic and human potential of all the world's citizens. I am heartened that so many commercial banks and finance ministries and others around the world are beginning to show such an interest in microcredit. We know that this is not the only answer; we still need investments in education and health, infrastructure in many parts of the world, but we know that this is a critical

component of what will work in nearly any setting we can define.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that this tool not only transforms lives but lifts communities and societies as well. And that, after all, is what this summit is about. It is not just about giving individuals economic opportunity, it is about community, it is about responsibility. It is about seeing how we are all interconnected and interdependent in today's world. It is recognizing that in our country the fate of a welfare recipient in Denver or Washington is inextricably bound up with all of ours. It is understanding how lifting people out of poverty in India or Bangladesh redounds to the benefit of the entire community and creates fertile ground for democracy to live and grow because people have hope in the future.

So I think all of you who have helped to make the pictures that I've shown a reality, who have been advocates on behalf of microcredit and the concepts of community and responsibility that it represents, and I hope that as a result of this summit, many, many more people will understand how microcredit can transform lives, will learn lessons on how to do it right -- (inaudible) -- all of us will recognize that as we move toward this 21st century, we have an opportunity that has seldom come, if ever, in the history of humankind. We have a world that can, with technology, democracy, free enterprise, extend the benefits of prosperity and peace to countless millions whose lives can be lifted up.

So, for all of us, I hope that we will go forward from this summit more convinced than ever that providing economic opportunity, giving people a chance to be responsible, building community can happen everywhere if we have the will to make it so. Thank you for what you're doing. Godspeed on the work ahead. (Applause.)

END

TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A few years ago, I met a group of extraordinary women. They were all entrepreneurs in Denver. One of them ran a desktop publishing business, another owned a bakery, and a third was in the computer business. Each of these women had pulled herself out of poverty or off welfare.

For years, they were among the thousands of people in this country who can only dream of getting a bank loan to start a small business. The reality is that "too many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks," one woman told me.

But given the opportunity -- and a small cash loan -- these women were able to open businesses that helped them become self-sufficient and move off welfare and into the economic mainstream.

This concept of extending modest business loans to low-income citizens who are willing to work hard -- but have little or no collateral -- is called microcredit. And though it's called "micro," microcredit is really a big idea. Modest loans can transform lives, reclaim cities and rural areas from decay, and reduce the number of people living in poverty.

Just ask Connie Evans. Evans is president of the Women's Self-Employment Project, an organization that has provided business training, technical assistance, loans and moral support to thousands of women in Chicago. As a former community counselor in a public housing development, Evans met many women who needed a little jump start for their ideas. "It was clear that what they needed wasn't counseling but money," she said.

For more than a decade, Evans has watched low-income women build successful businesses and self-esteem with modest loans and the encouragement of other women. The Women's Self-Employment Project's success can be measured in countless ways -- in day-care centers, in catering businesses, in hair salons and in the hopeful eyes of children who have watched their parents work hard and succeed.

"I like being in control of my own destiny, my own fate," said Arinez Gilyard, a mother of three who started an in-home day-care center with business training and a \$200 loan from the Women's Self-Employment Project in Chicago. "I believe I will be self-employed the rest of my working life."

Why does microcredit work? Because it's a concept that provides opportunity, demands responsibility and strengthens communities. Many of the loan programs are built around peer-support networks. Borrowers become members of groups that meet regularly to discuss their challenges and seek and offer advice. The members also make sure that the loans are repaid on time. No new loans can be made unless all group members have kept up with their payments. As a result, most microcredit organizations can boast loan repayment rates of more than 90 percent -- a rate that is the envy of many commercial banks.

I've seen firsthand how providing credit to people on the margins of society can reap economic and social benefits. I have met with women worldwide who have told me how their lives changed from destitution to inspiration because community banks gave them the opportunity to start small businesses. These women live in the most remote parts of India, in the poorest barrios of South America and in places that have weathered civil wars and earthquakes. They now have the tools to secure better livings for their families and, in turn, strengthen their countries' economies.

While microcredit was conceived in the developing world, it can be an important "tool of opportunity" for many Americans -- for farmers whose livelihoods have been undermined by bad luck or bad weather, inner-city parents who are struggling to balance a job on the night shift with family responsibilities and welfare mothers eager to move off the public dole into work.

Last week, the President and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin presented the first Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development to organizations that have pioneered efforts to extend credit and economic opportunity to needy yet promising entrepreneurs. The Small Business Administration has awarded \$70 million in grants to non-profit microlending organizations. The President announced last week that he is requesting a \$1 billion increase over the next five years for community banking.

All of these efforts will be crucial to making sure no one is left behind in the new millennium. In an era of greater competition and scarcer resources -- an era when the gap between rich and poor is widening in many parts of the world -- microcredit can help our poorest citizens take control of their lives and their futures, and ultimately make the world a better place for us all.

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February 4, 1997

UNCLASSIFIED

SAN JOSE: THE FIRST LADY AND SECRETARY ALBRIGHT
THE INTERAMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (IIHR)

You will be visiting the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIRH or IIDH) for a walk-through of its headquarters in the San Pedro Section of San Jose and a roundtable discussion. You will meet the Executive Director, Juan E. Mendez (an Argentinian); the Director of Research, Roberto Cuellar; the Director for the Center for Electoral Promotion (CAPEL), Alberto Cordero, and the Administrative Officer, Charles Moyer (an American).

Following the walk-through, you will participate in a 45 minute round table discussion on "Women's Perspective and Role in Human Rights and Democracy in Central America." The roundtable participants will include several prominent women from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala involved in issues related to human rights and three IIDH staff members. (Participant list on next page.)

Background:

The Institute is an independent international institution created in 1980 through an agreement with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (which is also in Costa Rica) and the Government of Costa Rica. IIDH considers itself primarily an educational and research organization, but in fact plays a variety of unique other roles in support of the extension of human rights in Latin America. These have included technical assistance to Latin American governments in establishing Ombudsmen and other legal support for human rights. Its specialized institute, CAPEL (the Center for Electoral Promotion) assists both national electoral bodies and regional electoral associations.

Support for the International Institute for Human Rights IIDH) has been an important element of USAID's support for Human Rights in the hemisphere. The rationale has been (1) to have a regionally-focused organization, based in Latin America, run by Latin Americans, and not controlled by the United States, which (2) would have the stature to be listened to by governments, NGOs, and the press while establishing human rights norms in the hemisphere.

US support is currently about 25% of its core institutional budget. IIHR also receives substantial support from Nordic countries, Canada, the European Union and other donors.

Two of the founding members of the institute were the American international law expert, Thomas Buergenthal, and the current Costa Rican Ambassador to the United States, Sonia Picado, who plans to participate in the roundtable. The institute is housed in a former residence of the US Deputy Chief of Mission.

Unclassified

SAN JOSE: USAID SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA
THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Support for the International Institute for Human Rights (IIDH) has been a principal element of USAID's support for Human Rights in the hemisphere. The rationale of the assistance has been (1) to have a regionally-focused organization, based in Latin America, run by Latin Americans, and not controlled by the United States, which (2) would have the stature to be listened to by governments, NGOs, and the press while establishing human rights norms in the hemisphere.

IIDH was established in 1980 by the Inter-American Court of Justice and the Government of Costa Rica, but it has a governing board independent of both.

IIDH considers itself primarily an education and research organization, but in fact plays a variety of unique regional roles in support of the recognition of human rights. Its annual Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights is highly respected and draws participants from all countries of the hemisphere. Other specialized courses are given in sub-regions. Regional seminars and conferences draw in NGOs and government officials related to the justice sector. IIDH has helped various Latin American countries to establish Ombudsmen and other legal institutions recognizing and protecting human rights.

As the only organization of its kind, regional organizations regularly turn to IIDH for advice and assistance in the areas of human rights and elections. It has a number of smaller specialized programs dealing with the administration of justice, human rights and security forces, gender and human rights, etc. Its Center for Electoral Promotion (CAPEL) is the largest and best known of the specialized programs, and has helped develop electoral practices and organize elections in many countries.

Regional support for IIDH has been complemented by USAID bilateral missions in Central America, which have supported the adoption and protection of human rights within individual countries, through support to government institutions (especially new offices of ombudsmen) or through NGOs. In Guatemala, for example, assistance has included:

**Establishing and building up the Office of Human Rights Ombudsman, including developing a human rights case tracking system.

**A Street Children Support Project which helped develop a new Children's code, achieving recognition for children's rights.

**Assistance to the Women's Defense Bureau which trained psychologists to treat women who are victims of abuse.

Unclassified

SAN JOSE: Expected Participant List for
ROUNDTABLE ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (IIDH)

Juan E. Mendez

- Executive Director, IIDH
- Argentinian; Author of various publications on the protection of international human rights
- Former Executive Director, Human Rights Watch-Americas
- Advocate, who has represented litigants in cases before the Interamerican Court of Human Rights

Sonia Picado S.

- Ambassador of Costa Rica to the U.S.
- Vice President of the IIDH Council of Directors
- Former Executive Director of IIDH
- Former Vice President of the Interamerican Court of Human Rights
- Former professor of the Faculty of Law, Univ. of Costa Rica

Victoria Marina Velasquez de Aviles

- National Counsel for the Defense of Human Rights in El Salvador (also known as Human Rights Ombudsman)
- Attorney; doctorate in juris prudence and social science; former Minister of Labor
- Has adopted dynamic public positions on institutional issues related to human rights and democracy in El Salvador.
- Cited in State Dept 1995 human rights report her demonstrated "willingness to speak out on public issues".

Sonia Cansino

- Activist in the women's movement in El Salvador
- Sociologist; has published articles on the them of women's participation in politics.
- Works with a variety of human rights organizations on women's issues.

Patricia Rios

- Assistant Director, of Nicaraguan NGO, Si Mujeres
- One of six coordinators for a national health network of 44 women's organization, heading commission on maternal mortality
- Has participated in several international summits, including Conference on Women in Pejing.

Maria Eugenia Mijangos

- Activist in the movement for the human rights of women.
- Guatemalan
- Member of the Women's Civic and Political Convergence

Gilda Pacheco

- Coordinator of the Gender and Human Rights Program, IIDH
- Costa Rican
- Psychologist, university researcher on problems of migration and social discrimination in Central America
- Consultant to regional and international organizations

**SAN JOSE: VISIT OF THE FIRST LADY & SECRETARY OF STATE TO
INTERAMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

QUESTIONS & TALKING POINTS FOR ROUNDTABLE

Background:

The roundtable is expected to focus on two topics: "Human Rights issues related to Women & Children in Central America", and the IIDH program. You will not be expected to make a formal speech. There may be a couple of brief presentations by IIDH, shifting very quickly to informal discussions on the two topics.

Since the proposed participants are very knowledgeable and articulate and from several countries, we are suggesting discussion questions you may want to raise related to the two subtopics, rather than "talking points".

Issues related to Women & Children in Central America

- What are the key human rights issues that are crucial for women and children in Central America? Do these vary much among the countries?
- * To what extent is domestic violence a problem? Do women have the support of legal institutions or other organizations for protection and help?
- As countries have become more democratic and civil war subsided, have women been able to fully participate in the political life of their countries? What barriers remain?
- * To what extent is child labor a problem in the Central American countries? Is it equally a problem for minority (indigenous) children and those of other backgrounds? Are governments and private organizations actively addressing the problem?

Issues related broadly to Human Rights & IIDH

- With most governments now democratically elected and civilian, to what extent have they respected human rights and put into place systems to protect them?
- I've heard that a number of Central American countries have established the office of Human Rights Ombudsmen, and that IIDH has been in the forefront of this movement. To what extent are Ombudsmen working effectively? To what extent is this new system accepted? (NOTE: One of the participants in the roundtable will be the Ombudswoman from El Salvador.)

**SAN JOSE: PRESS STATEMENT/TALKING POINTS FOR THE FIRST LADY
AFTER VISIT TO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (IIDH)**

(1) Express appreciation for changing status of human rights in Central America.

- That freely elected governments of Central America have increasingly supported and adopted international human rights standards;
- That Governments of the region are putting into place legal standards supportive of human rights, even though they are not yet always able to fully enforce those standards;
- That steps are increasingly being taken to put enforcement mechanisms in place, such as human rights ombudsmen, to establish norms for the actions of police and security forces that are consistent with international human rights standards, and to make the justice system more accessible to those who have not had access to it in the past;
- These changes are obviously not complete. But they are well underway. The US clearly supports these changes. We encourage Central American governments, NGOs, and individual citizens to stay the course in making these important democratic changes.

(2) By our presence here today, we want to acknowledge the constructive role that the International Institute for Human Rights (IIDH) has played and continues to play:

- In promoting an informed discussion of the key human rights issues in Latin America and the Caribbean and how governments and NGOs can take actions to recognize and adopt human rights standards;
- In helping countries of the region establish institutions, such as human rights ombudsmen, and getting them functioning effectively; and
- In helping countries of the region to organize elections which can increasingly be considered free and fair, through its institute, CAPEL (The Center for Electoral Promotion).

(3) Finally, I would like to thank IIDH for bringing together a small group of people from several Central American countries who have played important roles in establishing human rights.

- The discussion has given me an opportunity to learn more about some of the specific rights problems affecting women and children in Central American

countries.

- **These problems are not unique to Central America, and I've learned of similar problems in discussions with women in other countries.**
- **The participants particularly focused on issues like domestic violence, work force discrimination even when legal protections are in place, and child labor.**

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

Country human rights reports for Central America (1996) identify **domestic and sexual violence** as the most prevalent violations of women's rights; such violence is widespread but vastly underreported. While all countries in the region have ratified the OAS' Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, "Convention of Belem do Para", numerous obstacles persist. Some countries lack adequate legislation, while in others women lack knowledge of their rights or the resources for assistance.

Women may be reluctant to file charges due to economic and societal pressures or the belief that cases are unlikely to be resolved. Even when women do attempt to file charges, police often refuse or discourage such complaints or conduct their investigations in a haphazard manner. Frequently, there is no mechanism to remove an alleged batterer from the home or restrain him from having contact with the woman while the investigation is proceeding. Judges and other judiciary staff display biased attitudes about women's culpability and credibility. And, in the case of sexual violence particularly, the state may require corroborated physical evidence of sexual assault from state-employed forensic doctors.

Recent positive developments include Costa Rica's success in passing a Law Against Domestic Violence and incorporating domestic abuse issues into police training. And in El Salvador, 1996 legislation overturned archaic laws mandating the acquittal of rapists who agreed to marry their victims.

Labor force discrimination is another area in which women's rights are frequently violated. Despite widespread legal protections, women generally earn less than men. Women constitute the majority of workers in low-paying jobs, e.g. those in the maquila and agricultural industries. In Guatemala, many employers in the manufacturing sector employ women and then fire them after a three-month "probationary period" if they are pregnant. There is little or no recourse from Guatemalan authorities to investigate and remedy the situation. Similar cases have been reported in other countries in the region as well, and pregnancy tests may even be a prerequisite to hiring.

Child labor is a critical problem as well. In Nicaragua, for example, 11.3 percent of all children from 6 to 14 years of age are employed or looking for work in the informal or agricultural sectors. In the larger cities, children often work the streets for a parent, or they may have been abandoned and are now working for themselves. Children commonly work during annual harvest out of economic necessity. While education may be required through at least the sixth grade, governments fail to devote sufficient resources to ensure **adequate educational and health services** for all children.

COSTA RICA: HUMAN RIGHTS

Central America in 1997 has been transformed from its 1980's image of a region filled with internal conflicts, abusive military and security forces and rampant human rights violations. The final peace accord signed in Guatemala in December ended the region's last armed conflict. All the Central American countries now have democratically-elected governments with strengthened civilian control over the military. All have constitutions which guarantee the basic human rights of their citizens, and all are members of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Serious human rights problems continue to exist in the region, but all of the governments are committed to respecting international human rights norms. The abuses that occur are the result of poverty, inexperienced security forces and government officials, and cultural patterns of violence, rather than of deliberate government policies as in the past. In all countries, local and international human rights organizations operate freely.

The most serious on-going human rights problem is that of impunity, for both common criminals and human rights abusers. Corruption and inefficiency of police and courts mean that prosecutions are rarely carried out in a timely fashion, and convictions are all too few. Escalating criminal violence and strong public dissatisfaction with the slow administration of justice has led to incidents of vigilante justice, particularly in Guatemala. USAID and the Department of Justice are working to strengthen police, public prosecutors' offices, and courts so that criminals and human rights abusers will be prosecuted and convicted in accordance with the laws of each country.

Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua are all dealing with the difficult task of investigating serious human rights abuses which occurred during their internal conflicts. The problem is most acute in Guatemala, where the armed conflict just ended in 1996, and where a UN-monitored Historical Clarification Commission is about to begin its investigative work. El Salvador, which celebrated 5 years of peace on January 16, is working toward full national reconciliation after the Truth Commission reported in 1993 on the many serious human rights violations which occurred during the war. In Honduras, though there was no armed conflict, the government and independent organizations are beginning to investigate the serious human rights abuses which occurred under military governments in the 1980's.

The rights of women, children, and indigenous peoples are guaranteed in the constitutions of Central American countries but not uniformly respected in practice. In each country, however, governments and NGOs are working to improve respect for these rights. Women are assuming increasingly important roles in the region's governments, as are indigenous peoples in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Newsletter of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights

Institutional

The IIHR receives the FIDEH's Institutional Award

The Inter-American Human Rights Forum (FIDEH), a non-governmental human rights organization made up of private individuals from 21 countries and which operates in the western hemisphere, has granted the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights its First Institutional Award for its work on behalf of the dissemination, education and promotion of human rights.

The award was presented at a ceremony in Quito, Ecuador, on December 10, during the inaugural ceremony of the Second General Assembly of the FIDEH, which was dedicated to "Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights." The IIHR was represented at the activity by Nina Pacari, a member of the Board of Directors, and Renato Zerbini, Head of the Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program.



From left to right: Renato Zerbini, Head of the IIHR's Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program; Benedito Mariano, FIDEH Secretary General; Rosalía Arteaga, Vice President of Ecuador; Juan F. Andrade, FIDEH National Secretary; Galo Galarza, representative of the Ministry of Foreign Relations; and Monseigneur Víctor Corral, Archbishop of Cuenca, Ecuador.

The Institute bids farewell to Dr. Daniel Zovatto

Daniel Zovatto Garetto resigned his post as Director of the Center for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (CAPEL), effective August 15, although he will continue to be linked to the activities of the IIHR as a consultant.

On behalf of the Institute, we wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the important contribution he has made to CAPEL and the Institute over the past twelve years. For part of that time he also served as the Administrative Director and the Deputy Executive Director of the Institute, participating in its growth as an educational and research center dedicated to the advancement of human rights in our hemisphere.

We also wish to place on record our appreciation of Daniel Zovatto's professional abilities and desire him every success in his future undertakings in the field of human rights.

Academic activities for the staff of the IIHR

During the last week of October, the IIHR hosted a visit from Elizabeth Odio Benito, a judge of the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and a member of the IIHR Board of Directors. As part of her visit to Headquarters, Ms. Odio Benito gave a talk about her experiences as a

judge with the War Crimes Tribunal, based in The Hague. This activity reflects the new policy being promoted by the directors of the Institute aimed at familiarizing the academic, technical and administrative staff with current world issues in the field of human rights. The presentation prompted questions from the

participants, who were keen to learn more about the complex work of the tribunal responsible for judging the crimes committed during the fratricidal war in the former Yugoslavia. The wide-ranging discussion that ensued provided ample proof that the objective of these activities for the staff is being achieved.

Editorial

The concept of civil society has become an increasingly important consideration for public policy makers in view of the process of democratic transition taking place in our hemisphere as this century draws to a close. Some would question whether democracy has actually been consolidated, and doubts have been raised about the particular characteristics or forms of democracy that are now taking shape. But perhaps the mere fact that the role of civil society is such a burning issue today is a positive sign of the acceptance that democratic constitutional government now enjoys in our culture and of the abandonment of the more authoritarian trends of the relatively recent past.

However, it is a cause for some concern that civil society is mentioned in different contexts and not always with a single meaning. For example, it is common to hear civil society mentioned in the same breath as the reform of the State. Both the reform of the State and the strengthening of civil society are important in themselves, but there is a clear intention in some quarters that non-governmental organizations be assigned functions and responsibilities that the State is relinquishing very rapidly. The way in which many civil society organizations have accepted the challenge without protest is highly commendable. Nonetheless, one may be forgiven for questioning whether it is realistic to expect civil society to fill the gap left by the scaling back, and in some cases

even the complete withdrawal, of the State without considering the conditions that are necessary for such change.

In addition to permanently monitoring human rights and actions organized by the community, non-governmental organizations are being asked to meet the needs in areas such as health, education, housing and even crime prevention, and in helping to deal with the increasing insecurity of the citizenry. However, all too often such efforts optimistically rely on the benevolence of volunteers and fail to consider the fact that insufficient resources are available to meet those needs. Another school of thought opposes the development of civil society since it realizes that, sooner or later, independent organizations will demand that the State go some way to meeting the needs. This would not serve the interests of those who wish to see a minimalist State recreated as soon as possible. According to this line of thinking, the fact that needs remain unmet is a necessary evil, and is at all events preferable to the social and political conflicts that could result from the development of a civil society that is effective and creative in representing the interests of the weak.

These positions seem diametrically opposed to the concept of participatory and inclusive democracy. What is worse, they are often a reflection of a deep-rooted suspicion of independent organizations and authoritarian attempts at social control that survive within

democracy. Paradoxically, while the provision of essential services is left to the creativity and commitment of civil society organizations, the conditions needed for their strong growth or real independence are neither created nor tolerated. Rather, civil society organizations are trusted provided that they are firmly under the control of a particular party and faithfully serve its interests. In extreme cases, the honor and reputation of social leaders who wish to be truly independent is attacked, and people who are committed to serving their communities and who don't but without neglect the essential role of being the critical conscience of society, are persecuted.

If today's democracy is to be meaningful for everyone, more and more responsibilities will inevitably have to be entrusted to the organizations that materialize spontaneously within society. But it is also important that we create a sense of the importance of such organizations and of their role in creating an authentic democracy that is exercised on a daily basis.

Juan E. Méndez

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Articles for publication

Through its Editorial Unit the IHR supports all those working in the human rights field in the region. Its catalogue of publications includes over 230 titles on important aspects of human rights, ranging from books to newsletters, compilations, manuals, teaching and educational materials, videos and, most recently, compact disks. The IHR produces five regular publications: the *NEWSLETTER* (quarterly), the *REVISTA IIDH* and the *BOLETIN ELECTORAL* (biannually), and two series, *ESTUDIOS BÁSICOS DE DERECHOS HUMANOS* and *ESTUDIOS ESPECIALIZADOS DE DERECHOS HUMANOS*. The Editorial Unit of the IHR will accept unpublished articles in the field of the legal and social sciences with an emphasis on human rights. Articles should be submitted to the Editorial Unit of the IHR. Rules governing presentation, size, format, etc., are to be found on the back cover of the *Revista IIDH* or may be requested directly from the Editorial Unit of the IHR.

The organizational structure of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights

In order to acquaint our readers with the profiles of the programs that make up the organizational structure of the IHR and the specific work that they do, in this and subsequent issues we shall be outlining how the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights carries out its work as an independent, academic institution. Over the course of the last fifteen years the IHR has obviously had to create new areas and programs to tackle major issues that have arisen and keyed to the prevailing conditions in Latin America. However, the focus of its actions continues to be the promotion and strengthening of respect for human rights and the consolidation of democracy.

Twenty-seven distinguished experts drawn from every corner of the hemisphere sit on the Board of Directors, the IHR's governing body. The Executive Directorate, with the support of the academic, technical and administrative staff, is responsible for executing the Institute's

programs and activities, with a multidisciplinary approach. The series of profiles begins with the Civil Society Area:

Civil Society Area

This Area focuses its efforts on the study of the major human rights problems affecting civil society, and on strengthening the organizational and institutional capabilities of civil society organizations, providing technical assistance for their professionalization, modernization and specialization for the monitoring and the protection of human rights. It is made up of the following programs and projects:

The Program for the Strengthening of Civil Society Organizations provides technical assistance and training to different organized groups within civil society in order to strengthen their contribution to the defense and promotion of human rights and their role in

procuring organized social solutions for the monitoring of government institutions, in the field of human rights.

The Gender and Human Rights Program conducts research into the major issues involved in women's human rights and contributes -through advisory and technical assistance to NGOs and other organizations committed to the elimination of gender-based inequalities- to the development of education, promotion and training mechanisms and actions that foster equality and respect for women's rights in every sphere of society.

The Program for Migrant Populations contributes to the identification of integrated legal solutions based on the observance and effective exercise of human rights, and to protection and assistance efforts for social groups whose human rights are affected by internal migration and migration to other

see next page

The Civil Society Area Team

Mayela Bonilla, Costa Rican. A bilingual executive secretary, she joined the IHR in 1989 as a secretary in the Executive Directorate. She is currently a secretary/assistant in the Area for the Gender and Human Rights Program and the Prevention of Torture Project.

Leda Chaverri, Costa Rican. A graduate in public relations, she joined the IHR in 1993 as a secretary with the NGO Program. She now works as a secretary in the Civil Society Area.

Costa Rican psychologist Gilda Pacheco Oreamuno joined the IHR in 1993 as a consultant and has been the Coordinator of the Gender and Human Rights Program since 1994. In addition to conducting research into the psychosocial implications of political violence in Central America, she is a professor of the Psychology Department of the University of Costa Rica, where she teaches courses in community psychology and social discrimination.

Ole Vedel Rasmussen, a Danish citizen, after obtaining a degree in medicine from the University of Copenhagen Ole specialized as a surgeon and urologist. He joined the IHR in 1994 as a medical consultant in charge of the Prevention of Torture Project. Co-founder of the First Medical Group of Amnesty International Against Torture. An associate of the Center for Rehabilitation and Research for the Vic-

tims of Torture and a member of the International Board for Rehabilitation for Victims of Torture (IRCT). Medical editor of the magazine "Torture" published by the IRCT.

Political scientist Cristina Zeledón M., a Costa Rican, has been Head of the IHR's Program for Migrant Populations since its creation in 1988 and is also the coordinator of the Technical Secretariat of the Permanent Consultation on Internal Displacement in the Americas (CPDIA).

Renato Zerbini Ribeiro Leão
Renato joined the IHR on March 1, 1995 as Head of the Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program. A Brazilian, he is an attorney and a graduate in international relations.

Victoria Napky Talavera. A Honduran attorney with postgraduate studies in human rights, since joining the IHR in 1989 she has served as the Coordinator of the Program for the Strengthening of Civil Society Organizations (formerly the Program for Technical Assistance to Non-

Governmental Organizations).

Roberto Cuéllar, Salvadoran. Attorney and psychologist. Director of Research and Development and of the Civil Society Area of the IHR; a member of the Board of Directors of Americas Watch; a visiting researcher at Harvard University School of Law (1986); a member of the delegation of the World Council of Churches to the United Nations (1980-1985); a former trial lawyer responsible for cases brought before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (1979-1985); a former Counsellor of the Human Rights Office of the Archbishopric in El Salvador (1975) and advisor to the IV Archbishop of San Salvador, Mr. Oscar Romero.



From left to right: Cristina, Ole, Leda, Gilda, Mayela, Renato, Victoria y Roberto.

continue from page 3

countries caused by political and social violence.

The Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program focuses its efforts on technical assistance for indigenous organizations and NGOs committed to the development and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. It also compiles domestic legislation and trains attorneys and members of indigenous communities. Furthermore, this program mobilizes technical resources to support the

ongoing efforts to develop an inter-American instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. **The Integrated Projects Unit** is currently responsible for two projects:

The Project for the Prevention of Torture and the Treatment of its Victims, which uses innovative approaches to promote the reinsertion and rehabilitation of minors and adults who have survived political and police violence. This project also trains health professionals in the treatment of victims of

torture, law and medical students in prevention and professional ethics, and the staffs of prisons and NGOs that work in the prison system in the prevention of torture.

The Education for Life in Democracy Project, which is developing and validating a model for teaching life in democracy and focuses human rights promotion and education at the local level.

Civil Society Area

Program for the Strengthening of Civil Society Organizations

Execution of the Project on Human Rights, the Security of the Citizenry and Civil Society is now under way. Targeted at 40 human rights and legal services organizations in Central America, Mexico and Panama, the objective of the Project is to address the issue of security from a human rights perspective and explore possible mechanisms for preventing and dealing with the problem that could be implemented by civil society.

In order to present the Project, working meetings were held with the directors and designated participants from organizations in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama,

Costa Rica, Mexico and Guatemala. IIHR officials explained how the technical instrument developed by the IIHR would be used to conduct a diagnostic, which will include a survey on victimization and information-gathering on the demographic, legal, economic and political aspects of the problem. This Project will be conducted in the target countries in small, clearly defined geographic areas - neighborhoods or parts of same - as a pilot experience. The civil society organizations taking part will be employing an innovative approach to the subject.

The first activity will be an analysis to identify

the risk factors as perceived and faced by the communities, the resources at their disposal to deal with them and the budget needed to define strategic plans that will be implemented by the organizations involved to tackle the problem of security. The analysis will take two months to complete.

The first workshop, scheduled for April 1997, will be used to study the theoretical inputs and the results of the analysis and then to draw up the plans of actions that the organizations in each country will implement to deal with the security problem from a human rights perspective.

Program for Migrant Populations and those Affected by Violence

Forum on legislative initiatives to afford legal protection to the displaced population

Lima, Peru, September 23-24, 1996

Organized by the *Mesa Nacional sobre Desplazamiento* in Peru, the main purpose of the activity was to draft a legislative proposal for integrated action to address the problems of the displaced population that is to be presented to the Executive Branch. The proposal was signed by the *Mesa Nacional*, the *Coordinadora Nacional de Desplazados y Comunidades en Reconstrucción*, and local governments involved with the problem.

The IIHR participated in its capacity as the Technical Secretariat of the Permanent Consultation on Internal Displacement in the Americas (CPDIA). Meetings were subsequently held with the Ombudsman of Peru and organizations involved in the problem of internal displacement in that country.

Workshop on protection for internally displaced persons

Cachipay, Colombia
November 4-6, 1996

This activity involved representatives of organizations from Guatemala and El Salvador with experience in this field, members of Colombian NGOs and numerous international organizations with experience in providing humanitarian assistance and legal protection for the victims of displacement.

The Technical Secretariat presented a paper on the international mechanisms that exist for the protection of internally displaced persons. It also introduced the compilation of legal norms presented by Francis Deng, the Representative of the UN Secretary General responsible for dealing with this problem, to the UN General Assembly in December 1995.

During the course of the workshop the participants also discussed some of the protection options that can be provided by the inter-American system (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights/Organization of American States).

Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
November 7, 1996

A meeting of the representatives of the organizations that make up the Permanent Consultation on Internal Displacement in the Americas (UNICEF, UNDP, PMA, UNHCR, the ICRC's office in Colombia and the IIHR) was held at UNICEF's Regional Office in Santafé de Bogotá. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed visit *in loco* to that country early next year.

The participants contributed valuable ideas and suggested ways in which they could collaborate. The mission will be made up of leading international experts in human rights and peace-building efforts, and technical consultants specializing in the prevention of displacement, legal protection, humanitarian assistance, lasting solutions, children and gender. The objective of the visit will be to evaluate the current situation of internally displaced persons and recommend measures to improve it, raise awareness and sensitize the international community about the consequences of the phenomenon, and discuss the feasibility of promoting an international colloquium on humanitarian action and the internally displaced population in that country.

Regional Forum on Human Rights, Refugees and Migrant Populations in Central America

San José, Costa Rica, October 28-30, 1996

Convened by the Central American Council of Ombudsmen and organized jointly by UNHCR, the ILO, UNICEF, OIM and the IIHR, this multisectoral and interdisciplinary event brought together over 120 people. The participants analyzed and discussed the problem with a view to proposing possible

solutions and guidelines for actions at the regional, national and local levels. They also recommended mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the guidelines. The event was attended by government officials from Central America, Mexico, other countries in this and other continents, the Ombudsmen from Central

America, the Ombudsman of Peru and representatives of the Ombudsman of Colombia and the Human Rights Commissioner of Mexico, international organizations, NGOs, churches, academic institutions and experts in migration.

Consultation on migrant woman and human rights in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica

August-October, 1996

As a contribution to the Regional Forum and with a view to providing up-to-date information on the situation vis-a-vis the human rights of women migrants, the IIHR's Gender and Human Rights and Migrant Populations Programs collaborated with UNHCR and the NGO "El Productor" in organizing this consultative process in which 68 women with different kinds of migratory status participated. The core topics addressed were the extent of

their knowledge and exercise of their rights and duties, and the violations of same, in both the public and private domains. The main objective was to exemplify, highlight and call attention to their situation and prevent victimization through an organized effort aimed, above all, at achieving the recognition and strengthening of their role in the development of protection and self-help strategies. The conclusions and recommendations of this activity provided

input for a short study that has been circulated under the title of "The right to speak and be heard."

Some of the recommendations and conclusions have since been incorporated into a paper entitled "Migrant women and human rights: the need for specific recognition," which was presented to the Forum jointly by the heads of the two IIHR programs involved, Gilda Pacheco and Cristina Zeledón.

Gender and Human Rights Program

First Hemispheric Meeting of Women Members of Cooperatives

San José, Costa Rica, November 18-19, 1996

The IIHR's Gender and Human Rights Program presented a paper entitled "Genesis of Human Rights and the Rights of Women Recognized in Vienna" at the First Hemispheric Meeting of Women Members of Cooperatives. The activity formed part of the Regional Conference "Deglobalization: Global Challenge-Local

Markets. The Cooperative Strategy," organized by the International Cooperative Alliance. During the activity the IIHR donated 50 teaching kits for the training of women community promoters in women's human rights, which were distributed among the delegates.

Second International Course in Women's Human Rights

The Second International Course in Women's Human Rights, organized by the *Movimiento Manuela Ramos* and UNIFEM, was held from November 25 to 29, 1996 in Lima, Peru. The purpose of this event was to contribute to the reworking and effective exercise of human

rights so as to encompass the rights of women. As was done at the previous activity, the IIHR donated an assortment of books and teaching materials on human rights in general and those of women in particular.

Presentation of the Radio Program "Encender la Esperanza"

At a meeting held at IIHR Headquarters on December 11, 1996, the radio program "Encender la Esperanza" was introduced to organizations that are using the Guide for training in Women's Human Rights. The program will be broadcast live with the collaboration of Radio F.I.R.E of the University for Peace.

This production is designed to complement the teaching kit donated by the IIHR to a wide range of organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, 850 in all, interested in the defense and promotion of women's human rights.

December 10: Human Rights Day

The IIHR took part in a round table, organized by the Costa Rican chapter of the Association in Support of the United Nations and the Human Rights Confederation for Central America (CODEHUCA), to commemorate the 48th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Rodolfo Piza Escalante and Jaime Ordóñez (IIHR), Alma Benítez (CODEHUCA) and Tatiana Flores (a member of the Association) spoke at the event. The discussions centered around the Universal Declaration and the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Inaugurating the event, the Executive Director of the IIHR Juan E. Méndez urged the participants to take advantage of the occasion to reflect on the important issues at stake. Once the presentations had been made, the audience was invited to participate in the discussions. These activities on the universal and regional protection systems, are undoubtedly of great interest to the general public, particularly as the speakers combine their practical experience with the theory of human rights.

Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program

Specialized Regional Seminar on Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples for the Andean Region

Indigenous rights have been a focus of the IIHR's academic activities since 1983. The situation and needs of indigenous peoples in the Americas call for sustained action by the Institute. It was for this reason that the IIHR decided to organize a series of seminars keyed to the situation and the development of indigenous issues in each subregion of the western hemisphere. The first seminar was targeted at the Andean Region, made up of

Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

The Specialized Regional Seminar on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the Andean Region was held from November 25 to 27 in Quito, Ecuador, with the following objectives: 1) to foster subregional discussions on priority issues for the indigenous organizations of each subregion related to executing, protecting and reclaiming the human

rights of indigenous peoples; 2) to provide an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, the development and evaluation of proposals and a discussion of the progress achieved in the struggle for the recognition of the human rights of these peoples; and, 3) to help strengthen the capabilities of the leadership of indigenous organizations in protecting and reclaiming the rights of their peoples.

The issues addressed were: the universality of human rights and indigenous peoples; citizenship, democracy and indigenous peoples; land, territory and the

environment; a comparison of international instruments; the inter-American protection system; domestic legislation and local power; gender; sustainable development and indigenous law.

The inaugural ceremony and academic activities were held at the regional headquarters of the *Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar* in Quito, and the Seminar was inaugurated, on behalf of Juan E. Méndez, Executive Director of the IIHR, by Nina Pacari and Hernán Salgado, members of the IIHR Board of Directors. The Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Ecuador and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean collaborated in the event, and support was provided by the Government of Sweden/SIDA.

The IIHR was represented at the activity by Roberto Cuéllar, Director of Research and Development and of the Civil Society Area; Renato Zerbini, Head of the Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Program; and Soraya Murillo of the Unit on Courses.

The professors were: Nina Pacari (Ecuador), Diego Iturralde (Bolivia), Ariel Dulitzky (Argentina), María Arboleda (Ecuador), Jorge Luis Vaca-Flor (Bolivia), Jorge León (Ecuador), Roque Roldán (Colombia) and José Mendoza (Panama).

The closing address was delivered by the Vice-President of Bolivia, Víctor Hugo Cárdenas.



Roberto Cuéllar, Director of Research and Development and of the Civil Society Area of the IIHR; Víctor Hugo Cárdenas, Vice-President of Bolivia; Mariano Morocho, Secretary for Ethnic Affairs of Ecuador; and Enrique Ayla, Chancellor of the *Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar*.

Fifteenth Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights

"Fernando Volio Jiménez"

June 17 - 27, 1997

San José, Costa Rica

The objective of the Interdisciplinary Course is to provide training in human rights, afford participants an opportunity to share their experiences and foster a democratic discussion of the subject at the highest level.

It is open to all persons involved in human rights, either academically or through their work, with a university degree or other higher education qualification. The activity is of inter-American nature and brings together the different sectors working in human rights through panel discussions, lectures, case studies and participatory activities.

Applications for the course should be submitted in writing. If you wish to apply, indicate the reasons why you wish to participate, the population that would benefit from your participation, and in what way. Please attach your *curriculum vitae*.

The closing date for applications is April 22, 1997. Successful applicants will be notified after April 29. Applications should be addressed to:

XV Curso Interdisciplinario
Atn.: Lorena González Volio
Subdirectora de Operaciones Educativas
Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos
Apartado 10.081-1000 San José, Costa Rica

Phone: (506) 234-0404 Fax: (506) 234-0955
or 234-7402
Email: oeiidh@sol.racsa.co.cr

A limited number of scholarships are available. The registration fee and the cost of the study materials (US\$70) must be paid upon registration.

First Specialized Regional Course in Human Rights for Mexico and Central America

With the support of the Commission of the European Union, the First Specialized Regional Course in Human Rights for Mexico and Central America was held in Guatemala City from November 18 to 23.

Over 110 people took part, drawn from governments and different sectors of civil society (universities, women, indigenous peoples, youth, ombudsmen, etc).

The national counterpart agencies were the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Ombudsman's Office and the Archbishopric's Human Rights Office. MINUGUA also collaborated.

In order to ensure that the course addressed the major issues of interest to the region, alumni of the IIHR's Fourteenth Interdisciplinary Course (1996) based in Mexico and Central America were asked to propose possible topics for study and discussion. This approach marked a new departure in the method used to prepare the academic content of these regional courses. Following the systematization of the information and consultations with the Directorate of the Institute, five core topics were chosen, namely: 1) peace; 2) economic, social and cultural rights; 3) the inter-American system for the protection of human rights; 4) the administration of justice; and, 5) the security of the citizenry. Led by prominent academics, the lectures and participatory activities focused on these topics. Some of the participatory activities were also coordinated by alumni of previous interdisciplinary courses who made an invaluable contribution to the organization of the course.

The President of Guatemala, Alvaro Arzú,



Inauguration of the First Specialized Regional Course in Human Rights for Mexico and Central America.

From left to right: the Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Commission for Central America and Panama, Dieter König; the Minister of Foreign Relations of Guatemala, Eduardo Stein; the President of Guatemala, Alvaro Arzú; the Executive Director of the IIHR, Juan E. Méndez; the Ombudsman of Guatemala, Jorge Mario García Laguardia; and the Director of the Human Rights Office of the Archbishopric of Guatemala, Ronald Ochaeta.

delivered the inaugural address for the course during a ceremony held at the National Palace, which was also attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Eduardo Stein; the Ambassador for Central America and Panama of the Delegation of the European Commission, Dieter König; the IIHR Executive Director, Juan Méndez; the directors of the national counterpart agencies; members of the local diplomatic corps; alumni of the IIHR's Interdisciplinary Courses and the course participants.

During the activity, a series of additional meetings were organized for Guatemalan alumni of the IIHR's fourteen Interdisciplinary Courses and other local people interested in specific human rights issues. These talks were given by the teaching staff brought in for the course.

The academic program also included a one-day activity in Antigua Guatemala on November 20, where the keynote speaker was the Vice-Minister of Foreign Relations, Gabriel Aguilera, who gave a talk on the peace process in his country.

On November 22, a debate on impunity and criminality led by Carlos Chipocq and Andrés Domínguez was held in the lecture hall of the Bar Association and was open to the general public.

The closing address was delivered by the Ombudsman of Guatemala, Jorge Mario García Laguardia, at a ceremony attended by the counterpart agencies and the participants.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Specialized Regional Courses in Human Rights have so far covered the following regions of Latin America: the Andean Region (October 25-30, 1993), the Southern Cone (October 3-8, 1994), Brazil (October 23-28, 1995), and now Mexico and Central America.



Alumni of the IIHR's 14 Interdisciplinary Courses who aided in the organization of the Regional Course and participated in the session on "Impunity and Criminality" led by Andrés Domínguez.

The CRE sponsors another Annual Meeting of Coordinators of Education in Human Rights

Representatives of all the Latin American chapters of Amnesty International (AI) attended the Latin American Regional Workshop for the Exchange of Experiences and Material on Education in Human Rights, organized by the Center for Educational Resources (CRE) and held in Bogotá, Colombia in October. The objectives of the activity were: a) to provide training in education in human rights for the members of the chapters of AI responsible for education; b) to facilitate the exchange of experiences among the chapters of AI that have produced materials and provided training in their respective countries; and, c) to review methodologies proposed by the CRE and the chapters of AI for education in human rights.

Spread over three days, the meeting provided an opportunity for the individuals responsible for this area to give presentations on the work they do in their respective countries. The specialists invited to participate - Rosa María Mujica (Peru), Manuel Restrepo (Colombia) and Vicente Arranz (Guatemala) - were on hand to contrast the experience of AI with that of other NGOs and institutions in Latin America.

Some of the results of the exchange of experiences

Argentine Chapter: recently printed the book *"Todos y Cada Uno frente al Desafío de los Derechos Humanos."*

Ecuadoran Chapter: explained its objectives in promoting the Curriculum Reform Project, the ability of teachers to transfer their knowledge, the use of the mass media and

the design of materials for children.

Chilean Chapter: art is a medium that can be used to incorporate human rights values into education. As an example of their work they sang a delightful song which had everyone up on their feet.

Paraguayan Chapter: spoke about the possibility of working with AMARC, the Association of Community Radio Stations of Latin America, in order to disseminate their message.

Mexican Chapter: uses games as a participatory methodology. These games have an academic goal.

Colombian Chapter: highlighted the work of the Cali Group targeted at young police officers.

Brazilian Chapter: impressed the other participants with the different agreements they have established with other NGOs and the effective education they are providing to police officers.

Peruvian Chapter: executes a permanent program of work with journalists; its human rights training includes parents and representatives.

Venezuelan Chapter: played some radio spots designed to support the Education Program. Also showed a video of the recent Rights to Defend Rights Seminar, the first of its kind, in which the CRE was actively involved. This chapter is presently focusing on the training of other NGOs.

Puerto Rican Chapter: organizes the Festival of the Rights of the Child, held November 20 each year, with drama and music workshops and other activities for children. The primary objective is to unite members of the com-

munity. Showed a children's video in which a major Puerto Rican artist appears.

Uruguayan Chapter: holds workshops on human rights and citizenship for members of other human rights organizations. They hope to create a library and are keen to receive materials for their workshops (songs, jokes, etc.).

Lola Cendales and Alfonso Torres (Colombia) and Victor Hugo Naranjo (Costa Rica) were in charge of the training at this activity, dealing with the systematization of experiences for education in human rights and strategies for mobilizing sources of resources, respectively.

The closing address at the event was delivered by Juan E. Mendez, Executive Director of the IIHR, who presented a paper on education and the defense of human rights.

Reflections on the event

Education in human rights is the way in which the different Latin American chapters of AI make an important contribution to their own communities, maintain a high profile and help to prevent human rights violations. For the past five years the region has benefitted from the valuable support of the Norwegian project "Educating for Freedom," but this is now coming to an end, precisely when the Latin American chapters have gained a lot of experience and raised expectations throughout the region with their educational activities. This has spurred the Project's liaison committee to adopt measures to raise funds from other donors and continue to operate in the years ahead.

Forthcoming Activities of the IIHR Regional Conference on Armed Forces, Democracy and Human Rights on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century

The current Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army's Southern Command, General Wesley K. Clark, has again invited the IIHR to co-sponsor a regional conference on democracy and human rights for Ministers of Defense and armed forces chiefs from countries in the hemisphere.

The activity will address issues related to the strengthening of the democratic consolidation process, the promotion of respect for human rights within the military, and the latter's projection and role vis-à-vis the rest of society.

The conference, which will be held February 4-6, 1997, in Miami, Florida, marks the continuation of the First Regional Conference that took place February 5-7, 1996. Entitled "The Role of the Armed Forces in the Protection of Human Rights," the first event was organized following the agreements of the Summit of the Americas and the Meeting of Defense Ministers in Williamsburg.

The topics that will be addressed at the second conference are: "Transition to Democracy in the Western Hemisphere and the Role of the Armed Forces in Protecting Human Rights"; "Training and Education in Human Rights in the Armed Forces"; "The Relationship between the Armed Forces and the Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations"; and, "Progress in Achieving Respect for Human Rights in the Western Hemisphere: the Situation in 1996-97." There will also be a working session group to discuss the question of how a culture of respect for human rights can be created.

The conference will be attended by prominent academics and political leaders, including César Gaviria Trujillo, Secretary General of the Organization of American States; José Ayala Lasso, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Federico Mayor, Secretary General of UNESCO; John Shattuck, U.S. Assis-

tant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Laurence Whitehead, an academic from Oxford University; and José Miguel Vivanco, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch/Americas.

The IIHR delegation will be led by its President, Pedro Nikken, and include other members of the Board of Directors, namely: Sonia Picado, the Ambassador of Costa Rica to the U.S. and Vice-President of the IIHR; Margaret Crahan; Allan Brewer-Carías; Robert K. Goldman; Claudio Grossman (who is also President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights); and Diego García-Sayán, the Executive Director of the Andean Commission of Jurists. The IIHR will also be represented by its Executive Director, Juan E. Méndez; the Director of the Public Institutions Area, Gonzalo Elizondo; and Rodolfo Cerdas and Marcelo Varela, Director and Head of the IIHR's Security Forces, Human Rights and Democracy Program, respectively.

Administration of Justice and Human Rights Program

I. Draft Basic Law of the Judiciary of Nicaragua

Various activities were implemented between October and December 1996 to promote the Basic Law of the Judiciary drafted by the National Commission of Jurists -composed of representatives of the National Assembly, the Supreme Court of Justice and civil society- with the support of the Administration of Justice Program. Specifically, seminars were held to disseminate the document and obtain feedback from the public in the cities of León, Matagalpa and Managua, familiarizing both the legal community and civil society with the bill and gathering information from the different sectors involved in the reform of the Nicaraguan judicial system.

Meetings were also held with the Supreme Court of Justice and the National Commission of Jurists in order to study the feasibility of incorporating into the bill the recommendations made at the dissemination seminars. The final draft of the bill was then drawn up and duly submitted to the National Assembly of Nicaragua for its enactment.

II. Technical Missions

a) Technical Missions to Paraguay for Follow Up and Negotiation September 16-20, September 29-October 1, October 19-25, 1996

Continuing the activities prior to the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement for the Improvement of the Administration of Justice in Paraguay, several missions were carried out to that country to define logistical aspects, program the activities to be executed and work out technical details concerning the signing of the agreement between the Commission of the European Union, the Supreme Court of Justice and the IJHR.

b) Preparatory Technical Mission to Nicaragua November 17-18, 1996

The Administration of Justice Program contracted the services of a group of Nicaraguan professionals in order to study -in conjunction with external consultants and IJHR officials- possible improvements to that country's judicial system.

The group was composed of officials involved with the National Assembly of Nicaragua and the Supreme Court of Justice, and representatives of Nicaragua's civil society. They recommended a number of improvements that could be made to the country's judicial system so as to enhance the implementation and observance of human rights.

The mission was carried out November 17-18 and evaluated the progress achieved by the group of Nicaraguan consultants and the need to propose and implement integrated projects to improve the country's judicial system.

c) Preparatory Technical Mission to Mexico November 27-28, 1996

The IJHR plans to incorporate North America into the Program next year and the Commission of the European Union has already pledged funding for this purpose. Specifically, a course on the implementation of international law in judicial decisions has been designed, in order to encourage judges to take the norms of international law -especially those involving human rights- into consideration in resolving cases in domestic courts.

A preparatory mission was therefore planned to determine some of the different logistical and organizational factors required for the successful execution of the course.

d) Technical Mission to Bolivia December 2-6, 1996

Continuing the negotiations with the Supreme Court of Justice of Bolivia in regard to the technical cooperation project in the administration of justice in that country, a follow-up technical mission was carried out to Sucre, where the Supreme Court of Justice has its headquarters, to meet with the pertinent judicial officials and discuss the progress that has been made and the feasibility of implementing the project.

e) Cooperation Mission to Peru December 6, 1996

Peru offers fertile ground for the promotion of human rights and specifically for strengthening and consolidating the judiciary as an independent and legitimate branch of government. The IJHR regards the work that could be done in the country over the next few years as especially important.

The Administration of Justice Program, mindful of this need and in response to requests for cooperation in this field, took part in the "Forum on Due Process in Peru," the last in a series of activities conducted over the course of the year on this subject, which addressed the issue of international norms and due process.

The IJHR's participation brought it into contact with different national entities interested in the opening and strengthening of the Judiciary as a means of guaranteeing respect for fundamental rights, an opportunity that should

be seized upon for the implementation of future activities based on a clear understanding of the situation in Peru.

III. Training Courses

a) Course on Judicial Reasoning. Guatemala October 18 and 19, 1996

As follow up to the activities for the promotion of human rights and the training of operators involved in the administration of justice, a specialized course on judicial reasoning was held in Antigua, Guatemala for around 45 judicial officials representing different courts and judicial circuits in the country. The activity was supported by the Judicial Branch of Guatemala, with technical cooperation being provided by its School of Judicial Studies.

The following topics were addressed at the course:

- How to study a case in the light of the law, doctrine and jurisprudence.
- The application of different criteria in the resolution of the conflicts brought before the courts.
- Special ways of interpreting human rights.
- Criteria for weighing evidence in human rights cases.
- Judicial reasoning in different legal fields.

b) First National Congress of the Judicature. Costa Rica October 30-November 2, 1996

As part of its cooperation activities aimed at improving the judicial systems of Latin America, the Administration of Justice Program accepted an invitation from the Costa Rican Association of the Judicature to participate in the First National Congress of the Judicature, held at the end of October and the beginning of November.

At the congress, IJHR consultants Perfecto Andrés Ibáñez and Luigi Ferrajoli and Program officials presented papers on "The Role of Judges in a Democratic Society," and "Judicial Councils in Europe and Latin America."

The issues addressed -one of the principal points of the training activities conducted this year- were especially interesting and important to the democratization processes in which the countries, and especially the Judiciaries, of the region are involved. An understanding of the role that judges are called upon to perform in modern democratic societies has a direct impact on the legitimization of the judicial system and respect for human rights and strengthens the Rule of Law in democratic states.

Missions to Provide Advisory Assistance and Promote the Creation of an Ombudsman's Office in Uruguay

At the express request of the Office of the Vice-President of Uruguay, which prepared and presented a bill to parliament for the creation of the office of the Ombudsman in that country, the IIHR carried out a series of activities for the primary purpose of promoting the importance of creating this institution to consolidate democracy in Latin America. Invited to participate as international experts were representatives of Ombudsmen's offices and former Ombudsmen from Latin America and Spain.

These missions were carried out in three stages. During the first, executed from October 3 to 5 and October 23 to 24, academic conferences were held to promote and disseminate the activity. The experts invited to participate were the Argentine Ombudsman, Jorge Luis Maiorano; the Deputy Ombudsman of Spain, Antonio Rovira Viñas; the former Ombudsman of Spain, Alvaro Gil Robles; and Héctor Dávalos, Executive Secretary of the Human Rights Commission of Mexico. The IIHR was represented by María Elena Martínez, a mem-

ber of its Board of Directors; Gonzalo Elizondo, Director of the Public Institutions Area; and Jaime Ordóñez, Coordinator of the Administration of Justice and Ombudsman Programs.

As follow up to these activities, the IIHR and consultant Jaime Córdoba Triviño carried out a mission to conduct an analysis of the activities for the next period. This mission visited the Embassy of the Commission of the European Union to meet with Jesús Orús, of the CEU staff, who expressed great interest in the actions scheduled to be executed by the IIHR-CEU Ombudsman Program in support of the creation of the Office of the Ombudsman in Uruguay.



First Mission for the creation of an Ombudsman Office in Uruguay.

The mission reports prepared by the different experts who took part pointed up the urgent need to make a series of modifications to the existing bill if the institution of Ombudsman is to be created in the near future in Uruguay.

CAPEL

Area of Political Participation and Governability

• Seminar to Support the Strengthening of Political Parties in Central America

Under the agreement aimed at strengthening democratic governability in the region, IIHR/CAPEL and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized the Seminar to Support the Strengthening of Political Parties in Central America, held in San Salvador, El Salvador, on November 14 and 15. The Government of Norway generously provided funding for this activity.

In view of the similarities between the political systems of El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, political and academic leaders from all three countries were invited to attend the seminar for the purpose of analyzing and discussing, in working committees, the role of party organizations as mediators, the ongoing internal democratization processes, the financing of political parties and the relationship between the latter and the branches of government.

The information garnered by the *Componente Latinobarometro* was presented at the seminar

to provide input for determining the electorate's perceptions and expectations of the function and management of political parties in Central America.

The following Latin American experts spoke at the seminar: Costa Rican congressman Constantino Urcuyo (political parties as mediators); UNDP expert Carlos Eduardo Mena (internal democratization mechanisms); Costa Rican congressman Saúl Weisleder (the funding of political parties); and, Humberto

Nogueira, Dean of the School of Law and Social Sciences of the University of Talca, Chile (the relationship between political parties and the branches of government).

Over fifty politicians and academics from the countries attended the event, which was organized as a contribution to the strengthening of political parties as they develop and adapt to the needs of a dynamic, changing and demanding society.



From left to right: Adriana Prado, Regional Coordinator of UNDP's Governability in Central America Project; Luis Alberto Cordero, Acting Director of CAPEL; Juan Méndez, Executive Director of the IIHR; Julio Gamero, Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador; Fernando Zumbado, Director of UNDP's Regional Division for Latin America and the Caribbean; and Joana Merlin-Scholtes, the Resident Representative of UNDP/El Salvador.

• Seminar on Parliament and Governability in Central America

The Program for Legislative Development (PRODEL), a specialized program of IIHR/CAPEL, conducted a seminar entitled "Parliament and Governability in Central America" in San José, Costa Rica, from December 5 to 6, which was funded by the Government of Norway.

Targeted primarily at the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Congresses of Central America, the participants in the activity were Central American legislators, members of the most important parliamentary parties. Professors from prestigious universities and research centers in Latin America and the United States addressed issues such as: the problems of governability in Central America; parliament, civil society and the political system; political parties, parliament and governability; parliament and constitutional justice; parliamentary ethics, transparency and parliamentary responsibility; instruments of governability; and, the challenges involved in

the modernization of parliaments.

The primary objective of the activity was to bring together Central American congressmen to determine the role of parliament in governability and establish to what extent Central American congresses actually perform this role. Efforts were made to identify the factors that hinder the execution of parliamentary activities and thus affect governability, and to propose solutions to these problems.

The meeting made it possible to identify some of the main areas in which IIHR/CAPEL could provide technical assistance for the



From left to right: Alberto Borea, former President of the Senate of Peru; Luis Alberto Cordero, Acting Director of CAPEL; Olga Cristina Carney de Noack, President of the Commission for Technical Support to the Congress of Guatemala; Constantino Urcuyo, a deputy to the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica; and Hugo Alfonso Muñoz, a professor at the University of Costa Rica.

modernization of parliaments in Central America and thereby enable them to perform their important role in the process of governability in the region.

Area of International Cooperation

• Observation Mission to Nicaragua

IIHR/CAPEL dispatched a mission of observers to monitor the general elections in Nicaragua on October 20. The IIHR was represented by four members of its Board of Directors - Margaret Crahan, Robert K. Goldman, María Elena Martínez and Rodolfo Piza-, Executive Director Juan E. Méndez, Director of Research and Development Roberto Cuéllar, and the Acting Director of CAPEL, Luis Alberto Cordero. The representatives of electoral bodies in the Americas were: Alvaro Chocano, President of the National Electoral Tribunal of Peru; Jorge Díaz, President of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of El Salvador; Mario Aguilar, President of the National Electoral Tribunal of Honduras; Carlos Pardo, President of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Ecuador; Carlos Urruty, Minister of the Electoral Court of Uruguay; Jorge Lazarte, a member of the National Electoral Court of Bolivia; Jorge Otaño, Secretary of the National Electoral Chamber of Argentina; and Fernando Mayorga, Advisor to the National Electoral Council of

Colombia. The following political analysts also took part: Harold Forsyth, a Peruvian congressman; Rachel McCleary, a political scientist from the University of Georgetown; and Oscar Alvarez, a political scientist from Costa Rica.

During its stay in Nicaragua, the Mission met with Violeta Barrios of Chamorro, President of Nicaragua; Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo; Commandant Joaquín Cuadra Lacayo, Commander-in-Chief of the Army; the members of the Board of Directors of the Ethics and Transparency Group; the presidential candidates of the Liberal Alliance, the Conservative Party, the *Movimiento Renovador Sandinista* and the *Camino Cristiano Nicaragüense* Party. The observers also held discussions with the



The members of the Observation Mission pictured with the President of Nicaragua, Violeta Barrios of Chamorro.

directors of several media organizations: Francisco Chamorro, Chief of Information of *El Nuevo Diario*; Danilo Lacayo, Director of the Program *Buenos Días*; and Pedro Javier Solís, Deputy Director of *La Prensa*. They also met with Gustavo Parajón and Gilberto Aguirre, President and Executive Director, respectively, of the Council of Evangelical Churches (CEPAD).

• Sixth Conference of the Association of South American Electoral Organizations (Quito Protocol)

The Sixth Conference of the Association of South American Electoral Organizations (Quito Protocol), organized jointly by the Superior Electoral Tribunal of Brazil and IIHR/CAPEL,

in its capacity as the Executive Secretariat, was held in Brasília on December 9 and 10. The core topic addressed during the activity was the right to political participation, given the need to promote a democratic political culture in which our peoples understand the importance of exercising their right to vote.

The agreements adopted at this conference are designed, among other things, to increase participation in electoral processes, modernize electoral organizations and train their permanent technical staffs, and promote civic education and democratic values.

Technical Assistance

* Technical Assistance Project to the National Electoral Court of Bolivia

The National Electoral Court of Bolivia approved the second phase of the technical assistance project, which will focus on the areas of electoral geography, the Civil and Electoral Registries, and citizen education and electoral training and information.

The Project will provide technical support for the general elections scheduled for June 1, 1997.

The extension to the Project covers the period October 1996 through August 1997.

* Project in the Dominican Republic: the design of a strategy for developing a truly functional and participatory democratic political system

IIHR/CAPEL, the Technological Institute (INTEC) and the PID (Democratic Initiatives Program/PUCAMAYMA) co-sponsored the implementation of a project to design a strategy for developing a truly functional and participatory democratic political system. The activities were concluded in November.

* Project in the Dominican Republic: Activities in support of the *Grupo de Acción por la Democracia y Participación*, for an electoral promotion project.

The external evaluation proposed by USAID/Dominican Republic, involving various activities, was carried out in October.

Lastly, the final mission for the analysis of the short-term situation was conducted in November. This information will be used by consultant Rodolfo Cerdas in drafting the Final Political Report.

Meeting with the Representatives of the Scandinavian Countries in Central America

On October 30, 1996, the IIHR organized a meeting at its Headquarters with the ambassadors of Norway, Sweden and Denmark in Central America and the representatives of PRODECA (Denmark) and NORAD (Norway). This important meeting was attended by Eivor Halkjaer, the Ambassador of Sweden in Nicaragua, Orla Bakdal, the Ambassador of Norway in Nicaragua, Liv A. Kerr, the Ambassador of Norway in Costa Rica, Ingemar Cedeberg, Counsellor of the Embassy of Sweden in Guatemala, Karin Rohlin, First Secretary of the Embassy of Sweden in Nicaragua, Jon O. Brobholt, First Secretary of the Embassy of Norway in Nicaragua, Ingunn Kepsvik, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Norway-NORAD in Nicaragua, Hege Fiskness, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Norway in Costa Rica, and Peter Hellmers, Coordinator of PRODECA, Costa Rica.

The IIHR was represented by Juan E. Méndez, Executive Director, Roberto Cuéllar, Director of Research and Development and of the Civil Society Area, Charles Moyer, Administrative and Financial Director, Luis Alberto Cordero, Acting Director of CAPEL, Gilda Pacheco, Coordinator of the Gender and Human Rights Program, and Nicolas Boeglin, Assistant to the

Director of Research and Development.

The meeting permitted a fruitful exchange of ideas on the human rights work carried out in the region over the past five years by the governments and organizations concerned. Based on the political platform presented by the Executive Director of the IIHR, the participants outlined the challenges for the future and how the Scandinavian cooperation agencies and the IIHR should articulate their support and efforts to meet them.



From left to right: Peter Hellmers, Coordinator of PRODECA, Costa Rica; Ingunn Kepsvik, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Norway-NORAD in Nicaragua; and Jon O. Brobholt, First Secretary of the Embassy of Norway in Nicaragua.

The IIHR attends the signing of the Peace Accords in Guatemala

An IIHR delegation led by Rodolfo Piza, a member of the Board of Directors, and composed of Juan Méndez, Executive Director, and Roberto Cuéllar, Director of Research and Development and of the Civil Society Area, attended the historic ceremony for the signing of the peace accords at the National

Palace in Guatemala City on December 29. The delegation took advantage of the opportunity to meet with other government delegations and senior officials of international cooperation agencies also on hand for this important event in the region.

New Publications

El Sistema Interamericano de Protección de los Derechos Humanos: aspectos institucionales y procesales
IIDH, 1996, 600 p. **US\$30.00**

An updated, carefully prepared study, this outstanding work by Héctor Faúndez Ledesma is a much-needed contribution to the specialized literature on the inter-American system of protection. The author pays special attention to both normative and procedural aspects, and to the jurisdictions and procedures of the treaty bodies monitoring implementation. The publication is a useful contribution to the dissemination of the subject in general and to the ongoing debate within specialized legal circles on the future of the inter-American protection system. (In Spanish).

Maleta Didática Educação para a Cidadania
Its expeditious treatment of topics and original format will motivate educators to use this kit of materials in human rights training and promotion targeted at young students. The new Portuguese-language version incorporates a large number of new activities of interest to Brazilian educators. The contents are divided into units on freedom, equality, solidarity, participation, a teaching guide and an evaluation instrument. (In Portuguese)

Legislación Militar Centroamericana
IIDH, 1000 p. **US\$50.00**
This compilation of current military legislation in Central America is the first comparative law study to be carried out on this subject. (In Spanish).

Protección Internacional de los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres

The book "Protección Internacional de los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres," sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Relations, will be published at the end of January. It contains the papers presented by the specialists and case studies prepared by the participants at the First Course/Workshop on this subject held in San José, Costa Rica, in July 1996. This publication will be launched simultaneously in 20 countries in the region on March 8, 1997, in conjunction with the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Human Rights. (In Spanish).