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REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
IN PRESS BRIEFING

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, good morning and thank you all very much for coming here this morning and being here at the Department of State. We have a few other activities going on in the building today, which explains this particular setting.

This afternoon, we're having an event at the White House with the President in observation of International Women's Day, and we wanted to preview that event with you here now and have a discussion with you -- something that we'll not have an opportunity to do this afternoon. And, as you know, I'm very honored to have the First Lady with us here today, and Bonnie Campbell, who's the Director of the Justice Department's Office of Violence Against Women. I would also like to introduce Theresa Loar, who is the State Department's Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, a position created by Congress in which Theresa really is doing a fantastic job. We are at this all the time.

And to get us started, what I wanted to do is to invite the First Lady to give us an idea what to expect from the President and from our event this afternoon.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. And sorry I didn't see the folks in the second row, but, hello. Thank you for coming.

Thank everybody for coming. And congratulations to you on your upcoming nuptials. That may be the big news that comes out of this. (Laughter.)

I really appreciate this opportunity. A year ago, the Secretary and I gave speeches here at the State Department on International Women's Day about the intentions and plans of the United States to pursue as actively as possible within our foreign policy an emphasis on women's rights and an emphasis on working with like-minded countries and NGOs in order to further the agenda that came out of Beijing.

It was a fitting day to give such speeches because ever since its beginning at the turn of the century, International Women's Day has been a catalyst for change. And as the Secretary said, in a few hours we will be joining the President, the United Nations Secretary General, Attorney General Reno, a number of members of Congress and a member of the Thai Parliament and other leaders to celebrate the progress that has been made, and to talk about the new steps that the President is directing the administration to take to further our objective of ensuring the human rights of women around the world.

Since the Beijing Conference, even though it's been a relatively short period of time, there has been a rather significant, measurable progress in furthering the agenda set forth at Beijing. Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals have all demonstrated their commitment to that agenda. Everywhere I go -- and some of you have traveled with me on these trips -- I spend a considerable amount of time meeting with non-governmental

organizations, as well as representatives of governments and with individual women, to talk about the challenges and obstacles that a particular society faces, and to share ideas about what we can do together to try to further this agenda. I've seen a lot of progress just within the years that I have been traveling. And that progress is testament to the growing awareness around the world of the importance of these issues.

But there is more that needs to be done and more that we in the United States can do to give leadership and support to these efforts. And among the announcements that the President will make is that we will continue to build on the Violence Against Women Act that was passed here in the United States, in this administration, by announcing that there will be an additional \$10 million over the next two years to respond to requests from governments and NGOs to help them fight violence against women abroad.

Bonnie Campbell will speak more to that point in a few minutes. But I know, personally, I've referred many visitors from around the world to Bonnie Campbell. And she has had a great deal of impact in helping to provide technical assistance, encouragement, experience from the United States in order to make the issue of

violence against women -- which really surfaced at the Nairobi Conference, but took really serious steps out of Beijing -- into reality.

Some of you have written about issues of trafficking of women. We think there are at least a million women trafficked across borders every year. I would personally argue that it's probably more than that, but at least we can track about a million. And we know that a lot of the countries that are the sources of this trafficking are in the former Soviet Union -- countries that are facing economic difficulties and problems. This is an international problem that needs to be confronted internationally.

Today, the President will ask the Attorney General to make sure that our laws here at home are going to be of help in working with multilateral organizations, as well as individual nations, to do a better job in combating trafficking. The President will announce a partnership with the government of Ukraine to fight trafficking to and from that country -- one of the countries most affected in the last several years.

We need to do more to warn potential victims about the advertising that they respond to for jobs as nannies or waitresses or whatever it might be that entices them. We need to strengthen law enforcement's response in order to try to stop trafficking at its source. And, again, we can provide you more information about that. We will convene an international conference to spotlight what is being done to combat trafficking.

One important tool in the fight for women's rights that the United States does not have is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women -- also known as CEDAW. Despite the fact that our government signed this treaty almost two decades ago, despite its proven track record as a very good strategy in a number of countries around the world and in multilateral efforts to improve women's rights, the United States stands alone among industrialized democracies -- along with countries like Sudan -- in not ratifying this. And today the President will again call on the United States Senate to act to ensure that this treaty can be ratified by July of this year, in time for the 150th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention.

Finally, we will announce today \$2.5 million to help support the women of Afghanistan who have been brutalized, silenced and rendered invisible by the Taliban. We will fund grass-roots organizations to help provide women in Pakistani refugee camps with the services they need now and the skills they'll need eventually when they return to Afghanistan. And in Afghanistan we will work with non-governmental organizations to help train women to become community health workers and address basic health issues, especially those that affect children.

All of this comes out of our concern about the rights of women. It comes out of this initiative that has really taken shape

in this administration. It comes out of the leadership that this Secretary of State has given to women's issues and it is something that we hope will gain greater and greater awareness among the American people and be something that we can continue to speak out again and again about and celebrate progress with respect to the next International Women's Day, and the next and the next and the next. But we feel very strongly about this, and as you'll see this afternoon, it is a major part of how we view American foreign policy and our role in leadership in the world.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you very much, Mrs. Clinton. I think all of us know that we have no better spokesperson on this subject than the First Lady, who is so highly respected abroad as she talks about women's issues as part of our overall foreign policy. And everywhere I go, everybody keeps congratulating me on the fact that we have such a First Lady.

The main point that I would like to add is that the initiatives announced today are part of an ongoing strategy to identify and seize the opportunities to advance the status of women around the world. And a year ago here at the Department, as the First Lady said, we had a meeting to begin a process of advancing the status of women as part of the mainstream of American foreign policy. And today's announcements and remarks by the President and the First Lady and the Attorney General will reflect that.

We have made ratification of CEDAW a priority. I had a discussion with Chairman Helms about it yesterday; it's not his favorite treaty, but I have made very clear that it is an administration policy. We have made the treatment of women a key element in our policies towards Afghanistan and in our discussions with the Taliban. And I think some of you who were with me while we were in Pakistan and visited the refugee camps know how important that trip was and the sense that we gave to them about our concern about their condition.

In our human rights reporting and international law enforcement activities, we place new emphasis on the halting of trafficking of women and girls. And this agreement that we have developed with Ukraine I think is just one example. I was in Ukraine a few days ago, and it was a subject that we talked about at length. I think it's very a very important initiative.

In fact, wherever I go, I do try to meet with NGOs or community leaders who are working on human rights issues or on initiatives to help women. I think it is a way of showing that America cares about their work and that we will help wherever we can. It clearly is a great learning experience for me, and I enjoy those meetings tremendously. In some countries, it's also a not-so-subtle way of saying that America is watching and that we expect the rights and safety of human rights workers and NGOs to be honored.

More broadly, in our development of refugee assistance programs, we're taking into account more and more of the special

needs of women. And partly this is to keep women and children from being exploited or abused. And obviously we know that they are especially vulnerable in refugee situations and it's partly because, to a great extent, development depends on women.

What is interesting -- yesterday I was in Canada, and we were talking generally about the great role that they play in peacekeeping operations, and we discussed the importance of sensitizing peacekeepers generally in terms of the way that they deal with women in situations where they go into these countries. We have found that when women gain the knowledge and power to make our own choices, women are often able to break out of the cycle of poverty in which so many societies remain entrapped, and birth rates stabilize and environmental awareness increases and the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases slows and socially constructive values are more likely to be passed on to the next generation.

Again, just to tell you how much it's a part of all our discussions, again in Canada yesterday, where we talked about the necessity of dealing with future threats of weapons of mass destruction, we talked about the fact that if women in societies knew more about what the problems were, that it would help spread the word. So it's just a common theme in terms of the way that we deal with all foreign policy issues, of kind of using women's basic networks to get a problem out to the whole society.

And, really, this is how social progress is made and how peace and prosperity are built. That's why making the advancement of women a part of our foreign policy is not only the right thing to do, but I think it's the smart thing to do. And I can tell you that as you think about the next century and what it will be like, the movement to recognize the rights of women to empower them economically and politically, and to curb violence and exploitation I think is going to be one of the most powerful forces for shaping the globe.

And you can see now how the momentum is building on every continent. Everywhere, there are ripples from Beijing. The countries have developed their own systems for following up on Beijing, and we keep in touch with them. And it has just created a whole growth in terms of how women deal with their own societies and how we deal with each other. I think that for us, it's been important because we have put women's issues into the mainstream of foreign policy.

Now, before opening all this up to you, I would just like to invite Bonnie Campbell, who really has been such a leader on the issue of violence against women, to say a few words about the Justice Department's participation.

Bonnie.

MS. CAMPBELL: Thank you so much. When I was contemplating what I would say today, I realized -- and, Mrs.

Clinton, I know you will remember -- it was really three years ago this month that the President appointed me to head the Violence Against Women Office. I have to be very honest. I could not at that time have imagined how passage of the Violence Against Women Act and the obvious support of this administration would resonate around the world. I did not anticipate that. It has been an interesting and very wonderful experience for me.

It occurs to me that having a First Lady who has framed around the world and for us women's rights as human rights, which seems so basic, and a Secretary of State who quite literally shines a very bright light on these issues of violence against women, is the main reason that these issues have resonated. But there is also this notion of sort of a critical mass happening around the world.

My job, of course, is to focus on fighting violence against women at home, and I find that there are so many intersections with what happens globally. We very vigorously, every day, work hard to address domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking here at home.

When the Violence Against Women Act was signed into law, it was the first time the federal government had ever spoken to these issues of violence against women. And it's a partnership arrangement that we have with the states where most of these cases are investigated and prosecuted and heard. An important piece of the partnership is roughly \$2 billion going to the states which drives, as you can imagine, a great deal of energy and creativity and much-needed resources are added.

We understood when the Violence Against Women Act was passed, and when I was appointed, that a critical piece of transforming attitudes about violence against women would be elevating the public's awareness that no longer, for example, is domestic violence just a private dispute between two people and something that's not fit for legal adjudication, but rather, it is now a crime and it will be treated as seriously as any crime committed by a stranger.

It seems that having this administration in every way make that statement over and over again -- in Beijing, around the world -- struck a chord around the world. And I have the feeling that everywhere the First Lady goes, I'm then shortly visited by people who have been suggested by the First Lady that they meet with us, that we can share about our experiences how we got the Violence Against Women Act passed.

When I was fortunate enough to go to a Vital Voices Conference in Vienna -- I'm not a diplomat, so I really didn't understand in dealing with women from the former Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries how little their experience with democracy ever has been. And when I talked about getting the

Violence Against Women Act passed, they had these blank looks, like, "well, how do you do that?" Our engagement is so important -- how do you get a law passed where there is none? Why did the federal government in our setting speak to these issues? What were our goals? How do we do that?

Needless to say, in the context of our commitment to holding justice systems around the world accountable for protecting women from violence, became the mantra. It literally has been in a way that I could not have anticipated. We always articulate our goals very clearly. Needless to say, trafficking of women, which will be an important topic for us today, is violence against women. And we understand it also to be another one of those intersections with the rest of the globe. I talked -- in Teresa's wonderful parlance, we talk in terms of technical assistance, but it's really sharing of experiences and partnership -- not unlike our partnership with the states, in many ways -- where we can figure out together what are the best mechanisms.

But the goals are always the same: to hold justice systems, whether they are in the United States or any other region of the world, accountable toward the protection of women and children. To change the public attitudes about these crimes. It's not ever acceptable to be violent to women and children or to traffic women for sexual exploitation or slave labor -- not ever -- under anyone's cultural history or scheme. And finally, how do we come together where we live to stop it? And it turns out that we really can't do it without each other.

Yesterday I met with, along with many people from the Justice Department, with a delegation from Italy who really wanted to share with us their experience with trafficking in Europe, and to encourage us to view trafficking as a very significant, challenging, organized criminal entity that we will see, if we haven't already seen, in as big a way as they are. The sharing of information from the perspective of our prosecutors is critical -- because now we will meet again, probably next month; we will talk about how we literally share intelligence and information that is crucial to learning more about trafficking trends and enabling us to prosecute these cases.

Indeed, the world seems very small. I know just sitting here trying to recall the people from around the world with whom I have met, way too many to recount, but I have met with people from Thailand and Italy, as I said; and numerous places in Mexico; the U.K., Israel, Greece, Poland; numerous countries in Africa. The interest in what we're doing and the interesting partnership is absolutely profound to me.

Part of the problem I think we encounter -- and I'd be happy to address this more when we have opportunities for questions -- is that trafficking in particular is so shocking. When I go home to my wonderful state of Iowa, it's very difficult for them to believe that anybody anywhere would actually enslave human beings and sell them. I must tell you it is -- (inaudible) -- which I think is

one of most important consequences of today, from my perspective that the President, the First Lady, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General and others will say, unequivocally, this is happening, it is horrible and it's unacceptable.

I'm really honored to be here with both of you.

Q Madame Secretary, Mrs. Clinton, a great deal of the leadership on this, of course, as you know, has come from the United Nations, like the Beijing Conference. And I'm wondering if you could address what we can do about your efforts to get the U.N. dues paid by Congress and the insistence now by Congress again that family planning -- which is so crucial to women around the world, be taken back as a condition of approval of the arrears.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, we have all argued loud and clear that it is essential for the United States to pay up to the United Nations. These are dues and bills of a club, basically, that we started and we consider as a major help to American foreign policy and in American national interest that the United Nations function effectively.

Last year, I was very pleased that we were able to work out some excellent legislation that was able to pay back the bulk of our arrears, as well as lay down some very important benchmarks for United Nations reform and which we believe. And it was held up by a small group of members who believed that the issue of family planning should be attached to a national security issue.

I have now testified a number of times to the following point, which I deeply believe: I think that the issue of family planning is one that is a highly debated issue in the United States and the question of pro-choice and pro-life. And I happen to be on one side of the issue, as is the First Lady, and there are very good people on the other side of the issue. It is an issue of major importance and it should be debated, but it should be debated separately. It is a custom in the United States to be able to vote an issue up or down on the basis of its substance, and not on the basis that it is attached to national security legislation.

And it continues to be put forward that way and we are in danger of shutting down our foreign policy. And so we are saying that it's an important issue, it should be debated separately and we should allow it to have an up or down vote and move the rest of the legislation not only to do with U.N. arrears, but the IMF replenishment, the supplemental that also will have Iraq and Bosnia in it, as well as some natural disaster -- ways to help -- on its own merit. We cannot tie up these important issues with another important issue, which is the discussion on family planning.

Q No compromises?

raise this issue? And if you could just sort of articulate what kind of response you get initially.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that when I have raised it -- and I just raised it in Ukraine and then with the Russians earlier -- is basically I think they are originally surprised at the fact that this is going on and that they are concerned about it. I think that they -- I think as Bonnie also said, there's a lack of understanding about how a system works and what the government officials can do about this particular problem. So it's a matter not only of telling them that there's a problem, but that it is something that they can do something about. And I found generally a positive response, that they want to work on this. I think they see it as unacceptable and also as a mark against them as they try to be a part of organized democratic communities.

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, I have found the same.

Q And just to follow up on this, what ideas do they have about making changes and trying to stop it?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, they do want to know about how they get laws passed and what they can do about it. I mean, part of their problem, generally -- and I think we've had this discussion on other issues -- is that as communist systems have moved from centralized systems where they controlled everything and they knew how to get things done, they have now moved to trying to deal with developments of civil society and various pieces of enterprises that they have no control over. And so they ask -- you know you criticized us when we were centralized, how do you expect us now to do it when we're de-centralized. And we talk about how legislation can be done.

Q The administration has talked very tough about the Taliban in Afghanistan in particular, and has had intensive discussions with members of the Taliban. And I wonder whether you feel like you're getting anywhere with them, whether there has been any response that you consider positive to your message? And does the administration consider at all the possibility that if the civil war were to end there, that the pipeline would -- the United States might oppose a pipeline there until they identify --

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, I mean, we have been pressing them in public and private, and Carol, you were with me when we were in Pakistan. I think that we make very clear our objection to the way that they treat women. We have committed up to \$2.5 million in new funds for women's grass-roots organizations in Pakistan and ways of providing training. I think we -- it is very much a part of our thinking as we deal with Afghanistan, generally, is a subject that is raised all the time and that we feel that by keeping at it, we are making some progress. It's a very tough issue, I'm not trying to sugar-coat this in any way. It is certainly a priority for us and we keep stressing it. I've given a number of --well, portions of speeches on this and I know that the First Lady

has too. So it's up there as a big issue for us.

Q The President's trip to Africa is fast approaching. Could you give us a sense of what -- to what degree these are problems in the countries he'll be visiting, and do either of you plan special events or forums that will address --

MRS. CLINTON: I don't know that the Secretary is actually going to be able to make the trip, but in the planning for the trip -- we will be going to Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana and Senegal, and in each of those countries there's a long list of issues that the President will be addressing. And where appropriate, these issues are going to be a part of that mix.

I'm also looking for opportunities to meet with people in each of those countries, both in the government and outside the government, on issues affecting women and children. I'm particularly concerned, as I said when I went to Arusha, about the systematic exploitation of women and children by using them in military conflicts. And that's an issue that I hope to be able to address in the various forums there. We may have some further information either before the trip or during the trip to announce with respect to these specific issues that we've been talking about here as well.

Q Mrs. Clinton, could you talk about your role or your input into the President's decision not to accept any compromise language on the overseas abortion funding that's now held up money for the IMF and the repayment to the U.N.?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't have anything to add to what the Secretary said in describing what the government's position is.

Q Do you have conversations with the Secretary or with the President about your feelings about it?

MRS. CLINTON: I never talk about my conversations.

Q One of the issues, certainly of the former Soviet Union, as far as trafficking of women goes -- closely is economic --(inaudible). I missed if there was -- is there any economic incentive that goes along with --(inaudible)-- a partnership?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I don't know that there's any economic incentive that is directly tied to this initiative, but certainly Ukraine receives an extraordinary amount of American assistance right now, much of it aimed at economic initiatives. And one of the points that we've tried to make over the last several years in talking about these issues is that women and women's opportunity to make income has to be seen as part of economic growth and development. So we have changed in the last several years a lot of American aid programs and investment initiatives to focus on women. So it's not -- I can't say that it's a direct quid quo pro, but it is certainly part of our overall belief that the more women who are empowered to be economic actors on their own behalf and for

their families, the less likely that they would be pulled into some of these other difficulties.

MS. LOAR: Actually, Cynthia, part of our initiative with the government of Ukraine is a big component on economic empowerment. And that's a big part of it because that's something they had identified as a need. And that's a very preventive measure and it's part of our long-term assistance, so it will be an important part of that.

Q Can I just follow up? In term of -- it is well documented around the world -- in Israel and other places around the world that they are host countries. How well documented is trafficking in women in some of these countries?

MS. CAMPBELL: Let me tackle that. We are in the process right now of assessing the answer to that question. We prosecute very vigorously, so we know there is trafficking and we are trying to understand the trends.

But I do need to make a few points about the difficulty in amassing the data. First of all, like most other forms of violence against women, trafficking is vastly under-reported, often dealing with illegal immigrants, people holding false documents, people who are literally locked away in brothels. I mean, if they were enforced prostitution, walking the streets, we'd see them, but they're not. They fear retaliation, personal violence, violence against their families. They fear deportation. And, frankly, our ability to provide services because of their immigrant status is often very challenged. So we're trying to assess what are the trends, where are we seeing it, where is it coming from.

The President's directive, I think, will be enormously helpful in directing the resources, but also understanding what we need to do by way of providing services. From a prosecutor's prospective, if you want to prosecute traffickers, you have to discover who they are, where they are, from whence they come, how they got people illegally into this country; and then you have to have victims who are willing and not afraid to testify. And those two challenges are enormous. And we are diligently -- because even before Theresa's directive to look at trafficking, the Attorney General had asked us to look at it. So I hope shortly we'll know more than we know now. But the data are very sketchy and they are difficult to gather and assess.

Q The President is going to Latin America, too. It's a very wide area, very diverse. What are the issues --

MRS. CLINTON: Are you talking about when the President goes to the Summit of the Americas in Santiago? I should let the Secretary respond officially on that, but certainly much of the follow-up to the first Summit in Miami is going to be on that agenda.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: The President has asked that we

focus basically on three subjects. One is on education, as a whole -- and I think that both he and a number of the other Latin American leaders are very interested in getting the whole education level up in the hemisphere -- and the importance of that across the board to issues in each of the countries on questions of trade and questions of narco-trafficking. Those are the kind of central themes. But there are a number of other aspects that will obviously flow from that.

From what I know -- I'm sure you will corroborate this -- the President is looking forward very much to this summit and sees it as a very good vehicle for working even harder for establishing a partnership within the Americas that we consider very important to us throughout the world in terms of pursuing our national security agenda.

Q (Inaudible.)

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, that will certainly come up in terms of the education issues, in terms of all the issues, because it's an underlying issue. Let me also say I'm very glad -- as you know, there are not a lot of women foreign ministers. There are 11 in the world and a lot of them in this hemisphere. And Mexico now has a woman Foreign Minister, Rosaria Green, who happens to be part of my original -- group in New York. So we have our network of woman foreign ministers who are pursuing also within their countries some of the women's issues and it's what we talk about when we -- in addition to all the other subjects we talk about when we have conversations.

MRS. CLINTON: Hanging out with the foreign ministers.
(Laughter.)

Q I work for Newsweek and I'm actually based in Mexico now. Two questions: One is, you know, I live in a pretty sexist society now and I often wonder whether or not the two of you, or any of you, have experiences when you're trying to convince people that these should be on the agenda -- finding experiences where they don't get the fact that these are important issues, how you convince them. Do you have to bully them? Do you sweet-talk them? And then also, very specifically, the Rosaria Green point, do you foresee anything in terms of Mexico's foreign policy related to women's issues because she's now the foreign minister?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, life is not too different, you know, throughout the world. (Laughter.) I think we all have the same experiences and we all get together and share them. And I must say that one of the fun things that I have done, as the First Lady just said, hanging out with the foreign ministers in New York during the General Assembly -- eight of us -- at that stage there were only 10 women foreign ministers -- met and we talked about common experiences. And the combination of bullying and sweet talking, I think, we all know how to practice both arts.

Q Can you think of an example just to illustrate how you -- or even a success that you would say was really hard won, bringing somebody around to the realization that something was an important point?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think with Rosaria Green especially, she in New York was very much a part of a women's group that we had. I originally got together the women permanent reps. There happened to be seven of us, so we called ourselves the G7. (Laughter.) But she was there as a part of the United Nations system and was responsible for a lot of women's issues. She has now taken over --

(End of side one of tape.)

(Begin side two, in progress.)

I think that from my discussions with her she is looking at ways that women's issues can be more a part of their whole system.

But with her, she is also doing what I've tried to do, which is to try to increase the number of women in their foreign service and try to get more women out into representing their countries. I must say, I was asked often how I would be received by Arab countries, and I went to my first meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the first meeting I said, you may notice that I don't look quite the way my predecessors have looked; and this time you've all been very generous to me and next time we get together we'll talk about women's rights. And we did.

Q Did they chuckle when you said that or did they think you were joking?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Yes, yes, of course they chuckled. What did you expect? (Laughter.) But I do think that they have made a point of discussing with me some of the opportunities for women in their societies. And I have to tell you that as the representative of the United States and as a woman, I have been greeted in all countries with the highest respect. And I think that having a woman represent the most powerful country in the world is a message in itself that they react to.

MRS. CLINTON: Let me just follow up on that and say that in addition to the personal progress that can be marked by people who have achieved high positions, such as our Secretary of State and the other women in foreign ministries, I think you have to look at the extraordinary progress -- and it gets back to the question about how you institutionalize this -- that has occurred just in the last five years. There was a recent article talking about all the progress that has happened in the last two and half years from Beijing. But there was long process that led up to Beijing, starting in about 1993 and maybe even earlier, but that's

when I first was aware of it.

And I think you can mark progress in individual countries. You can mark progress in multilateral kinds of events, focusing on these issues affecting women. And I think you have to view it, as I do, as a kind of historical process. You move from the theoretical to the rhetorical to the practical and policy implications. And the theoretical has been there for a long time. There's been work done for about the last 30 years demonstrating the important connection between development of women and democracy and other kinds of progress that are not only good for the societies in which they take place, but are in the interests of the United States.

And then you can move to a rhetorical basis, which we certainly have seen done in Beijing and other places, where we begin to put a vocabulary out there that people can begin to accept and then it all of a sudden comes echoing back to you, to the practical implications. And there are enormous practical implications. And I think you can even look within our own administration. I mean, certainly when some of us started talking about something like microcredit a few years ago, it wasn't even a known issue among many people within the State or Treasury or Defense Departments, and now it's embraced as an element of American policy both at home and abroad because of the results.

So I think there are many examples. And progress isn't always in a straight line and it isn't easy. But I think that with persistence and with a capacity to show these results we can continue building on it. And that's, of course, one of our objectives from today, is to demonstrate that.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I think the First Lady and I have to leave. And I actually am going to go meet the Secretary General. And just as an example of what has happened is he has named a woman as Deputy Secretary General, one of the women that have been part of the original group, the Canadian permanent representative. He has a woman High Commissioner for Refugees, and a woman who is his High Commissioner for Human Rights. So it's moving through the system.

Theresa will be happy to stay to answer some more detailed questions, but I thank you.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you all very much.

Q Thank you.

END

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Mr. President,

Mr. Vice-President,
Ladies and gentlemen,

One evening not long ago I was sitting in an outdoor restaurant by the water. My chair was almost identical to the chairs they have in restaurants by the Vltava River in Prague. They were playing the same rock music they play in most Czech restaurants. I saw advertisements I'm familiar with back home. Above all, I was surrounded by young people who were similarly dressed, who drank familiar-looking drinks, and who behaved as casually as their contemporaries in Prague. Only their complexion and their facial features were different - for I was in Singapore.

I sat there thinking about this and again - for the umpteenth time - I realized an almost banal truth: that we now live in a single global civilization. The identity of this civilization does not lie merely in similar forms of dress, or similar drinks, or in the constant buzz of the same commercial music all around the world, or even in international advertising. It lies in something deeper: thanks to the modern idea of constant progress, with its inherent expansionism, and to the rapid evolution of science that comes directly from it, our planet has, for the first time in the long history of the human race, been covered in the space of a very few decades by a single civilization - one that is essentially technological. The world is now enmeshed in webs of telecommunication networks consisting of millions of tiny threads or capillaries that not only transmit information of all kinds at lightning speed, but also convey integrated models of social, political and economic behaviour. They are conduits for legal norms, as well as for billions and billions of dollars crisscrossing the world while remaining invisible even to those who deal directly with them. The life of the human race is completely interconnected not only in the informational sense, but in the causal sense as well. Anecdotically, I could illustrate this by reminding you - since I've already mentioned Singapore - that today all it takes is a single shady transaction initiated by a single devious bank clerk in Singapore to bring down a bank on the other side of the world. Thanks to the accomplishments of this civilization, practically all of us know what cheques, bonds, bills of exchange, and stocks are. We are familiar with CNN and Chernobyl, and we know who the Rolling Stones, or Nelson Mandela, or Salman Rushdie are. More than that, the capillaries that have so radically integrated this civilization also convey information about certain modes of

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human co-existence that have proven their worth, like democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, the laws of the market-place. Such information flows around the world and, in varying degrees, takes root in different places.

In modern times this global civilization emerged in the territory occupied by European and ultimately by Euro-American culture. Historically, it evolved from a combination of traditions – classical, Judaic and Christian. In theory, at least, it gives people not only the capacity for worldwide communication, but also a coordinated means of defending themselves against many common dangers. It can also, in an unprecedented way, make our life on this earth easier and open up to us hitherto unexplored horizons in our knowledge of ourselves and the world we live in.

And yet there is something not quite right about it. ←

Allow me to use this ceremonial gathering for a brief meditation on a subject which I have dwelt upon a great deal, and which I often bring up on occasions resembling this one. I want to focus today on the source of the dangers that threaten humanity in spite of this global civilization, and often directly because of it. Above all, I would like to speak about the ways in which these dangers can be confronted.

Many of the great problems we face today, as far as I understand them, have their origin in the fact that this global civilization, though in evidence everywhere, is no more than a thin veneer over the sum total of human awareness, if I may put it that way. This civilization is immensely fresh, young, new, and fragile, and the human spirit has accepted it with dizzying alacrity, without itself changing in any essential way. Humanity has evolved over long millennia in all manner of civilizations and cultures that gradually, and in very diverse ways, shaped our habits of mind, our relationship to the world, our models of behaviour and the values we accept and recognize. In essence, this new, single epidermis of world civilization merely covers or conceals the immense variety of cultures, of peoples, of religious worlds, of historical traditions and historically formed attitudes, all of which in a sense lie "beneath" it. At the same time, even as the veneer of world civilization expands, this "underside" of humanity, this hidden

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dimension of it, demands more and more clearly to be heard and to be granted a right to life.

And thus, while the world as a whole increasingly accepts the new habits of global civilization, another contradictory process is taking place: ancient traditions are reviving, different religions and cultures are awakening to new ways of being, seeking new room to exist, and struggling with growing fervour to realize what is unique to them and what makes them different from others. Ultimately they seek to give their individuality a political expression.

It is often said that in our time, every valley cries out for its own independence or will even fight for it. Many nations, or parts of them at least, are struggling against modern civilization or its main proponents for the right to worship their ancient gods and obey the ancient divine injunctions. They carry on their struggle using weapons provided by the very civilization they oppose. They employ radar, computers, lasers, nerve gases, and perhaps, in the future, even nuclear weapons – all products of the world they challenge – to help defend their ancient heritage against the erosions of modern civilization. In contrast with these technological inventions, other products of this civilization – like democracy or the idea of human rights – are not accepted in many places in the world because they are deemed to be hostile to local traditions.

In other words: the Euro-American world has equipped other parts of the globe with instruments that not only could effectively destroy the enlightened values which, among other things, made possible the invention of precisely these instruments, but which could well cripple the capacity of people to live together on this earth.

What follows from all of this?

It is my belief that this state of affairs contains a clear challenge not only to the Euro-American world but to our present-day civilization as a whole. It is a challenge to this civilization to start understanding itself as a multicultural and a multipolar civilization, whose meaning lies not in undermining the individuality of different spheres of culture and civilization but in allowing them to be more completely themselves. This will only be possible, even conceivable, if we all accept a basic code of mutual co-existence, a kind of common minimum we can all share, one that will enable us to go on living side by side. Yet such a code won't stand a chance

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if it is merely the product of a few who then proceed to force it on the rest. It must be an expression of the authentic will of everyone, growing out of the genuine spiritual roots hidden beneath the skin of our common, global civilization. If it is merely disseminated through the capillaries of this skin, the way Coca-cola ads are - as a commodity offered by some to others - such a code can hardly be expected to take hold in any profound or universal way.

But is humanity capable of such an undertaking? Is it not a hopelessly utopian idea? Haven't we so lost control of our destiny that we are condemned to gradual extinction in ever harsher high-tech clashes between cultures, because of our fatal inability to co-operate in the face of impending catastrophes, be they ecological, social, or demographic, or of dangers generated by the state of our civilization as such?

I don't know.

But I have not lost hope.

I have not lost hope because I am persuaded again and again that, lying dormant in the deepest roots of most, if not all, cultures there is an essential similarity, something that could be made - if the will to do so existed - a genuinely unifying starting point for that new code of human co-existence that would be firmly anchored in the great diversity of human traditions.

Don't we find somewhere in the foundations of most religions and cultures, though they may take a thousand and one distinct forms, common elements such as respect for what transcends us, whether we mean the mystery of Being, or a moral order that stands above us; certain imperatives that come to us from heaven, or from nature, or from our own hearts; a belief that our deeds will live after us; respect for our neighbours, for our families, for certain natural authorities; respect for human dignity and for nature: a sense of solidarity and benevolence towards guests who come with good intentions?

Isn't the common, ancient origin or human roots of our diverse spiritualities, each of which is merely another kind of human understanding

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of the same reality, the thing that can genuinely bring people of different cultures together?

And aren't the basic commandments of this archetypal spirituality in harmony with what even an unreligious person - without knowing exactly why - may consider proper and meaningful?

Naturally, I am not suggesting that modern people be compelled to worship ancient deities and accept rituals they have long since abandoned. I am suggesting something quite different: we must come to understand the deep mutual connection or kinship between the various forms of our spirituality. We must recollect our original spiritual and moral substance, which grew out of the same essential experience of humanity. I believe that this is the only way to achieve a genuine renewal of our sense of responsibility for ourselves and for the world. And at the same time, it is the only way to achieve a deeper understanding among cultures that will enable them to work together in a truly ecumenical way to create a new order for the world.

The veneer of global civilization that envelops the modern world and the consciousness of humanity, as we all know, has a dual nature, bringing into question, at every step of the way, the very values it is based upon, or which it propagates. The thousands of marvelous achievements of this civilization that work for us so well and enrich us can equally impoverish, diminish, and destroy our lives, and frequently do. Instead of serving people, many of these creations enslave them. Instead of helping people to develop their identities, they take them away. Almost every invention or discovery - from the splitting of the atom and the discovery of DNA to television and the computer - can be turned against us and used to our detriment. How much easier it is today than it was during the First World War to destroy an entire metropolis in a single air-raid. And how much easier would it be today, in the era of television, for a madman like Hitler or Stalin to pervert the spirit of a whole nation. When have people ever had the power we now possess to alter the climate of the planet or deplete its mineral resources or the wealth of its fauna and flora in the space of a few short decades? And how much more destructive potential do terrorists have at their disposal today than at the beginning of this century.

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In our era, it would seem that one part of the human brain, the rational part which has made all these morally neutral discoveries, has undergone exceptional development, while the other part, which should be alert to ensure that these discoveries really serve humanity and will not destroy it, has lagged behind catastrophically.

Yes, regardless of where I begin my thinking about the problems facing our civilization, I always return to the theme of human responsibility, which seems incapable of keeping pace with civilization and preventing it from turning against the human race. It's as though the world has simply become too much for us to deal with. ←

There is no way back. Only a dreamer can believe that the solution lies in curtailing the progress of civilization in some way or other. The main task in the coming era is something else: a radical renewal of our sense of responsibility. Our conscience must catch up to our reason, otherwise we are lost. ←

It is my profound belief that there is only one way to achieve this: we must divest ourselves of our egoistical anthropocentrism, our habit of seeing ourselves as masters of the universe who can do whatever occurs to us. We must discover a new respect for what transcends us: for the universe, for the earth, for nature, for life, and for reality. Our respect for other people, for other nations, and for other cultures, can only grow from a humble respect for the cosmic order and from an awareness that we are a part of it, that we share in it and that nothing of what we do is lost, but rather becomes part of the eternal memory of Being, where it is judged.

A better alternative for the future of humanity, therefore, clearly lies in imbuing our civilization with a spiritual dimension. It's not just a matter of understanding its multicultural nature and finding inspiration for the creation of a new world order in the common roots of all cultures. It is also essential that the Euro-American cultural sphere - the one which created this civilization and taught humanity its destructive pride - now return to its own spiritual roots and become an example to the rest of the world in the search for a new humility.

General observations of this type are certainly not difficult to make, nor are they new or revolutionary. Modern people are masters at describing

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the crises and the misery of the world which we shape, and for which we are responsible. We are much less adept at putting things right.

So what specifically is to be done?

I do not believe in some universal key or panacea. I am not an advocate of what Karl Popper called "holistic social engineering", particularly because I had to live most of my adult life in circumstances that resulted from an attempt to create a holistic Marxist utopia. I know more than enough, therefore, about efforts of this kind.

This does not relieve me, however, of the responsibility to think of ways to make the world better.

It will certainly not be easy to awaken in people a new sense of responsibility for the world, an ability to conduct themselves as if they were to live on this earth forever, and to be held answerable for its condition one day. Who knows how many horrific cataclysms humanity may have to go through before such a sense of responsibility is generally accepted. But this does not mean that those who wish to work for it cannot begin at once. It is a great task for teachers, educators, intellectuals, the clergy, artists, entrepreneurs, journalists, people active in all forms of public life.

Above all it is a task for politicians.

Even in the most democratic of conditions, politicians have immense influence, perhaps more than they themselves realize. This influence does not lie in their actual mandates, which in any case are considerably limited. It lies in something else: in the spontaneous impact their charisma has on the public.

The main task of the present generation of politicians is not, I think, to ingratiate themselves with the public through the decisions they take or their smiles on television. It is not to go on winning elections and ensuring themselves a place in the sun till the end of their days. Their role is something quite different: to assume their share of responsibility for the long-range prospects of our world and thus to set an example for the public in whose sight they work. Their responsibility is to think ahead boldly, not to fear the disfavour of the crowd, to imbue their actions with a spiritual dimension (which of course is not the same thing as ostentatious attendance at religious services), to explain again and again - both to the public and to

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their colleagues – that politics must do far more than reflect the interests of particular groups or lobbies. After all, politics is a matter of serving the community, which means that it is morality in practice. And how better to serve the community and practise morality than by seeking in the midst of the global (and globally threatened) civilization their own global political responsibility: that is, their responsibility for the very survival of the human race?

I don't believe that a politician who sets out on this risky path will inevitably jeopardize his or her political survival. This is a wrongheaded notion which assumes that the citizen is a fool and that political success depends on playing to this folly. That is not the way it is. A conscience slumbers in every human being, something divine. And that is what we have to put our trust in.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I find myself at perhaps the most famous university in the most powerful country in the world. With your permission, I will say a few words on the subject of the politics of a great power.

It is obvious that those who have the greatest power and influence also bear the greatest responsibility. Like it or not, the United States of America now bears probably the greatest responsibility for the direction our world will take. The United States, therefore, should reflect most deeply on this responsibility.

Isolationism has never paid off for the United States. Had it entered the First World War earlier, perhaps it would not have had to pay with anything like the casualties it actually incurred.

The same is true of the Second World War: when Hitler was getting ready to invade Czechoslovakia, and in so doing finally expose the lack of courage on the part of the western democracies, your President wrote a letter to the Czechoslovak President imploring him to come to some agreement with Hitler. Had he not deceived himself and the whole world into believing that an agreement could be made with this madman, had he instead shown a few teeth, perhaps the Second World War need not have happened, and tens of thousands of young Americans need not have died fighting in it.

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Likewise, just before the end of that war, had your President, who was otherwise an outstanding man, said a clear "no" to Stalin's decision to divide the world, perhaps the Cold War, which cost the United States hundreds of billions of dollars, need not have happened either.

I beg you: do not repeat these mistakes! You yourselves have always paid a heavy price for them! There is simply no escaping the responsibility you have as the most powerful country in the world.

There is far more at stake here than simply standing up to those who would like once again to divide the world into spheres of interest, or subjugate others who are different from them, and weaker. What is now at stake is saving the human race. In other words, it's a question of what I've already talked about: of understanding modern civilization as a multicultural and multipolar civilization, of turning our attention to the original spiritual sources of human culture and above all, of our own culture, of drawing from these sources the strength for a courageous and magnanimous creation of a new order for the world.

Not long ago I was at a gala dinner to mark an important anniversary. There were fifty Heads of State present, perhaps more, who came to honour the heroes and victims of the greatest war in human history. This was not a political conference, but the kind of social event that is meant principally to show hospitality and respect to the invited guests. When the seating plan was given out, I discovered to my surprise that those sitting at the table next to mine were not identified simply as representatives of a particular state, as was the case with all the other tables; they were referred to as "permanent members of the UN Security Council and the G7." I had mixed feelings about this. On the one hand, I thought how marvelous that the richest and most powerful of this world see each other often and even at this dinner, can talk informally and get to know each other better. On the other hand, a slight chill went down my spine, for I could not help observing that one table had been singled out as being special and particularly important. It was a table for the big powers. Somewhat perversely, I began to imagine that the people sitting at it were, along with their Russian caviar, dividing the rest of us up among themselves, without asking our opinion. Perhaps all this is merely the whimsy of a former and perhaps future playwright. But I wanted to express it here. For one simple reason: to emphasize the terrible gap that exists between the responsibility of the great powers and their hubris. The architect of that seating arrangement - I

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should think it was none of the attending Presidents – was not guided by a sense of responsibility for the world, but by the banal pride of the powerful.

But pride is precisely what will lead the world to hell. I am suggesting an alternative: humbly accepting our responsibility for the world.

There is one great opportunity in the matter of co-existence between nations and spheres of civilization, culture and religion that should be grasped and exploited to the limit. This is the appearance of supranational or regional communities. By now, there are many such communities in the world, with diverse characteristics and differing degrees of integration. I believe in this approach. I believe in the importance of organisms that lie somewhere between nation states and a world community, organisms that can be an important medium of global communication and co-operation. I believe that this trend towards integration in a world where – as I've said – every valley longs for independence, must be given the greatest possible support. These organisms, however, must not be an expression of integration merely for the sake of integration. They must be one of the many instruments enabling each region, each nation, to be both itself and capable of co-operation with others. That is, they must be one of the instruments enabling countries and peoples who are close to each other geographically, ethnically, culturally and economically and who have common security interests, to form associations and better communicate with each other and with the rest of the world. At the same time, all such regional communities must rid themselves of fear that other like communities are directed against them. Regional groupings in areas that have common traditions and a common political culture ought to be a natural part of the complex political architecture of the world. Co-operation between such regions ought to be a natural component of co-operation on a world-wide scale. As long as the broadening of NATO membership to include countries who feel culturally and politically a part of the region the Alliance was created to defend is seen by Russia, for example, as an anti-Russian undertaking, it will be a sign that Russia has not yet understood the challenge of this era.

The most important world organization is the United Nations. I think that the fiftieth anniversary of its birth could be an occasion to reflect on how to infuse it with a new ethos, a new strength, and a new meaning, and make it the truly most important arena of good co-operation among all cultures that make up our planetary civilization.

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But neither the strengthening of regional structures nor the strengthening of the UN will save the world if both processes are not informed by that renewed spiritual charge which I see as the only hope that the human race will survive another millennium.

I have touched on what I think politicians should do.

There is, however, one more force that has at least as much, if not more, influence on the general state of mind as politicians do.

That force is the mass media.

Only when fate sent me into the realm of high politics did I become fully aware of the media's double-edged power. Their dual impact is not a specialty of the media. It is merely a part, or an expression of the dual nature of today's civilization of which I have already spoken.

Thanks to television the whole world discovered, in the course of an evening, that there is a country called Rwanda where people are suffering beyond belief. Thanks to television it is possible to do at least a little to help those who are suffering. Thanks to television the whole world, in the course of a few seconds, was shocked and horrified about what happened in Oklahoma City and, at the same time, understood it as a great warning for all. Thanks to television the whole world knows that there exists an internationally recognized country called Bosnia and Herzegovina and that from the moment it recognized this country, the international community has tried unsuccessfully to divide it into grotesque mini-states according to the wishes of warlords who have never been recognized by anyone as anyone's legitimate representatives.

That is the wonderful side of today's mass media, or rather, of those who gather the news. Humanity's thanks belong to all those courageous reporters who voluntarily risk their lives wherever something evil is happening, in order to arouse the conscience of the world.

There is, however, another, less wonderful, aspect of television, one that merely revels in the horrors of the world or, unforgivably, makes them commonplace, or compels politicians to become first of all television stars.

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But where is it written that someone who is good on television is necessarily also a good politician? I never fail to be astonished at how much I am at the mercy of television directors and editors, at how my public image depends far more on them than it does on myself, at how important it is to smile appropriately on television, or choose the right tie, at how television forces me to express my thoughts as sparsely as possible, in witticisms, slogans or sound bites, at how easily my television image can be made to seem different from the real me. I am astonished by this and at the same time, I fear it serves no good purpose. I know politicians who have learned to see themselves only as the television camera does. Television has thus expropriated their personalities, and made them into something like television shadows of their former selves. I sometimes wonder whether they even sleep in a way that will look good on television.

I am not outraged with television or the press for distorting what I say, or ignoring it, or editing me to appear like some strange monster. I am not angry with the media when I see that a politician's rise or fall often depends more on them than on the politician concerned. What interests me is something else: the responsibility of those who have the mass media in their hands. They too bear responsibility for the world, and for the future of humanity. Just as the splitting of the atom can immensely enrich humanity in a thousand and one ways and, at the same time, can also threaten it with destruction, so television can have both good and evil consequences. Quickly, suggestively, and to an unprecedented degree, it can disseminate the spirit of understanding, humanity, human solidarity and spirituality, or it can stupefy whole nations and continents. And just as our use of atomic energy depends solely on our sense of responsibility, so the proper use of television's power to enter practically every household and every human mind depends on our sense of responsibility as well.

Whether our world is to be saved from everything that threatens it today depends above all on whether human beings come to their senses, whether they understand the degree of their responsibility and discover a new relationship to the very miracle of Being. The world is in the hands of us all. And yet some have a greater influence on its fate than others. The more influence a person has - be they politician or television announcer - the greater the demands placed on their sense of responsibility and the less they should think merely about personal interests.

Ladies and gentlemen,

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In conclusion allow me a brief personal remark. I was born in Prague and I lived there for decades without being allowed to study properly or visit other countries. Nevertheless, my mother never abandoned one of her secret and quite extravagant dreams: that one day I would study at Harvard. Fate did not permit me to fulfil her dream. But something else happened, something that would never have occurred even to my mother: I have received a doctoral degree at Harvard without even having to study here.

More than that, I have been given to see Singapore, and countless other exotic places. I have been given to understand how small this world is and how it torments itself with countless things it need not torment itself with if people could find within themselves a little more courage, a little more hope, a little more responsibility, a little more mutual understanding and love.

I don't know whether my mother is looking down at me from heaven, but if she is I can guess what she's probably thinking: she's thinking that I'm sticking my nose into matters that only people who have properly studied political science at Harvard have the right to stick their noses into.

I hope that you don't think so.

Thank you for your attention.



Texts of Remarks

by Hillary Rodham Clinton

President Vaclav Havel

Ambassador Madeleine Albright

Kevin Klose

July 4, 1996 in Prague

Following is a transcript of Mrs. Clinton's address as delivered at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty headquarters in Prague today:

Thank you. Thank you President Havel. Ministers, Ambassador Walker, Ambassador Zantovsky, Ambassador Albright, Mr. Klose, distinguished guests, staff of the radios, and listeners across the Czech Republic, Central and Eastern Europe, and the new, independent states.

It is an honor to have this opportunity to speak to you on the fourth of July 1996. I am especially pleased to be in the Czech Republic with the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, my friend, Madeleine Albright. Ambassador Albright is a daughter of Czechoslovakia whose family was uprooted by war and repression. In the United States she found a home, and the opportunity to rise as far as her God-given talents would take her. But never once did she forget her roots. We Americans are better for her service, and so are the people of Central Europe and around the world who believe in the cause of peace, liberty and justice.

One of the ways men and women in this country and this region kept alive their faith in freedom before 1989 was through Radio Free Europe's broadcasts.

Today I am speaking to you from the new headquarters of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague. This itself is an emblem of the political, economic and social transformations that have taken place in Central Europe.

Not so long ago, members of an old Soviet-style parliament filled this room. Today hundreds of journalists report the real news from within these walls. Not so long ago, this was a place where ideas were suppressed. Today, it is a place where ideas are given life and a voice that delivers them from the heart of this young democracy to the Baltics in the north, the Balkans in the south, and all the way east to the Pacific Ocean.

Ask anyone who fought for liberty in Central Europe during the Cold War and they will tell you that Radio Free Europe was like a member of the family. I have heard of men and women who always placed their radios in front of a certain window, or on one side of the house, where the signal from Radio Free Europe came in the strongest.

I have talked to men and women who, for years, arranged their daily schedules around Radio Free Europe's broadcasts. President Havel has said that he and other Czech dissidents relied on Radio Free Europe to share their ideas with their countrymen and women. Were it not for Radio Free Europe, he has said, he might have spent more years in prison.

For four decades, Radio Free Europe unmasked the lies and deceit of dictatorship by broadcasting information about the world beyond the Iron Curtain and spreading a message of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Now, Radio Free Europe has a new mission, but one no less urgent. It is helping to strengthen the foundations of democracy through news broadcasts, conferences about current affairs, and courses designed to promote an independent media in countries where a free press was silenced before. The United States continues to demonstrate its commitment to democracy by supporting Radio Free Europe's vital activities.

Today, Americans at home and abroad are celebrating our Independence Day, the 220th anniversary of our nation's birth. Throughout our history, America has represented an ideal of freedom, and of possibility and promise for humanity. Indeed, we are a nation of many different people, people from every corner of the world, but rooted in common values and hopes.

Our nation's story is of those values and hopes being realized. On our national seal is written: *E pluribus unum*. Out of many we are one - not just as a people, but in the democratic values that we cherish.

On this day marking America's independence, part of my heart is at home with my family and with the American people. But another part is here with you in Central Europe, a homeland to millions of Americans, a place where the principles of democracy have taken root, been nurtured, and now are flowering. I have traveled to this region on behalf of my husband to emphasize and strengthen the relationships between our countries and to celebrate your achievements in building strong democracies and dynamic market economies. I also carry a message of encouragement from America to people who might question the pace of progress or the pain of change. Perfecting democracy is a never-ending challenge, as my own country knows so well.

Over the past few days, I have had the chance to visit Romania and Poland. Now I am in Prague, one of Europe's jewels, where a Velvet Revolution peacefully buried more than 40 years of totalitarian rule in 1989. On Saturday, I will leave for Slovakia, Hungary, and Estonia. I only wish I had the time to visit every country in this region to see for myself the ways in which you are meeting the challenges of this extraordinary period.

Today, I would like to talk about the past and the future - a past that prevented old neighbors and friends from being partners, and a future that requires it.

For 50 years, a cruel and arbitrary line divided Europe. On one side of that line, people came together to contain the threat of Communism moving West. On the other side, tyranny and domination forced people to exchange their freedom for the false promise of a utopian ideal and a distorted sense of social stability.

Today, the Berlin Wall, as we know, is gone. There is no Iron Curtain. The line has been erased. In country after country, Communism has crumbled; democracy has come alive. The threat of nuclear war no longer hovers over us. Opportunities for peace and prosperity are greater than ever before. And the prospect of a new and even more dynamic civilization in Europe and the West is before us.

In Russia tens of millions of people exercised their democratic franchise by voting and opting to shape their future through peaceful, free choice. What a hopeful milestone for Russia and us all.

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Yet at the same time, we feel the strains of growing global competition and scarcer resources. The rapid pace of change -- the superficial homogenization of the world -- inflames old tensions and weighs us down with new ones. In every country in the world, families are under greater stress. The gap between the rich and the poor grows wider. Even in countries with advanced economies, the social safety net -- education, health care, pensions, good wages and jobs -- is fraying.

The greatest threat to democracy today is no longer a Communist monolith with imperial designs, but volatile economic and social conditions that emerged with the collapse of the old regimes and the demagogues and dictators that can be generated.

These challenges are not unique to Central Europe but to democracies new and old. To meet them, the West needs to expand its democratic family by opening up the institutions that have served us for decades. But even as we do this, we must recognize that democracy is not just about institutions; it is also about the internalization of democratic values in people's hearts, minds and everyday lives.

Along with wider political, economic and strategic alliances, we must consciously develop an alliance of democratic values to guide us as we confront the unavoidable questions of the 21st century: Questions about how to balance individual and community rights and responsibilities; about how families will raise children in the face of pressures from the mass media and the consumer culture; about personal identity and work in an age of globalization, information overload and high-technology; about the roles of women in society; about how people will be able to preserve their ethnic pride and value their national citizenship; about how nations will protect their sovereignty while cooperating regionally and globally with others.

But how do we convey to ourselves, and especially to our young people, the values upon which this alliance is based -- the values of opportunity, responsibility, community and respect for human dignity?

→ We do it the way it has always been done best; by building and strengthening civil society, a term I borrow from social scientists and philosophers who use it to describe the countless daily associations and actions that weave together the fabric of democratic life. In the early 19th century, de Tocqueville observed that voluntary organizations, activities, philanthropic associations, had already become a hallmark of American citizenship and a distinctive part of our national life.

Civil society is the vehicle for our values, the way we convey who we are and what we stand for. And when we encounter the inevitable setbacks and historical bumps in the road, the alliance of values that fuels civil society is what will carry us through.

In the short time I've been in Central Europe, I've already met with people who are forging this alliance of values and building democracy from the ground up. Earlier this week, I met with teachers in Romania who are developing a new pedagogy that emphasizes civic participation and democratic values. I met doctors and nurses caring for children with AIDS and leaders of voluntary organizations who are training citizens to participate in elections.

In Poland, I met leaders of non-governmental organizations who are helping citizens protect the environment, improve health services, promote women's rights and strengthen the free press.

And here in the Czech Republic, another set of free and fair elections has recently taken place. And the most remarkable thing about these elections was how unremarkable they were. Candidates debated, people voted, ballots were counted, and political leaders sorted out the consequences to form a new government. That's what we call a democracy based on values in action.

In Slovakia, Hungary and Estonia, I will meet with people working to strengthen the role of minorities, incorporate women into the full life of their societies, promote an independent judiciary and free democratic institutions.

In many cases, America and Americans are supporting these local efforts. And what we are creating together is more than the training of nurses and teachers, more than the strengthening of an independent media, more than the cleaning up of dirty water and polluted air.

what
live close

What we are creating together is an ethos of responsibility, caring and initiative that allows people to participate fully in the civic life of their communities and their countries.

We in America are also discovering that we have much to learn from you. As you -- the people of Central Europe --- construct democracy from the ruins of dictatorship, we Americans are reminded of just how precious freedom is, and what a stake we have in democracy's success around the world.

We also can offer, though, some lessons from our own experiences. The first is that democracy is a messy business that requires patience, hard work, flexibility and the acceptance of its inherent imperfections. For more than two centuries we Americans have been striving to perfect democracy and we will continue to do so but without any assurance we will ever fully succeed. Human nature guarantees that democracy requires constant nurturing and vigilance. But we can never waver from the struggle because nothing is more precious to us than the freedoms our ancestors struggled to preserve.

The second hard lesson is that democracy asks us to live peacefully as neighbors with people who are different from us and whom we may not even like. What most of us discover is that we share more in common than we think, and that we are stronger as a people if we overcome our superficial differences and unite around our shared interests and ideals.

And the third lesson is that democratic values must be steeped into our daily lives. President Woodrow Wilson, whose name graces the railway station and a boulevard near here, once said that "liberty does not consist...in mere declarations of the rights of man. It consists in the translation of those declarations into definite actions." Americans have taken that idea to heart.

Just last week, I was in Seattle, Washington meeting with a group of mothers who have formed a national organization to help fight crime on our streets and in their neighborhoods.

Community groups and civic associations across America raise money for their local schools, libraries, parks and hospitals. Nearly every town and city in America has voluntary church groups, Scout troops, sports leagues, book clubs, historical associations that act as mediating influences both on government and on the forces of a market economy.

→ Americans also come together when our values are endangered. As you may know, several dozen churches serving African-American congregations in different parts of the United States have been burned by criminals in the past few months. Our citizens have not met these acts of evil with silence or indifference. In nearly every instance, men and women of goodwill -- and all religious faiths -- have banded together to repair buildings and rebuild spirits in the aftermath of these anti-democratic hate crimes.

— No country is free of purveyors of hate and fear. But the measure of a country's dedication to the values of opportunity, responsibility, community and human dignity is how it resists the forces of darkness and intolerance.

In this century, we in the West have traveled together with you down a long and hard road, with many setbacks and tragedies along the way. But you never relinquished your faith. And neither did we.

Ambassador Albright has told me the story of how in 1995, during the 50th anniversary celebration of the end of World War II, she visited the lands of western Bohemia, lands that were liberated by American troops in 1945. In every town and village she visited, the Czech people were waving American flags -- flags with 48 stars. The American troops had passed out the flags a half a century ago, when America had only 48 states. And these men and women in the Czech countryside had preserved those flags, held on to them year after year of Soviet domination, just as they had preserved their faith that freedom would finally come.

Freedom has come, and now it is up to each of us to determine what freedom will mean.

→ Last night, it was a beautiful evening in Prague, and I walked across the Charles Bridge. It was filled with young people, talking, laughing, listening to music. And I could not help but think that throughout Central Europe there were groups of young people doing the same.

→ But I was also reminded of the young men and women of earlier generations who lost years of their productive lives in prison or exile to make sacrifices for the values we celebrate today.

→ And I thought too of all the young people who fought and died for the freedom to form their own ideas, speak their own words, make their own decisions and dream their own dreams.

I cannot tell you what any of the young people on the Charles Bridge will do with their lives. But I know that it will be their choice, without fear or coercion from any ideology or government.

Many will make mistakes along the way. But it is our duty, having struggled so long to arrive at this moment of opportunity, to pass on to them a clear understanding of the values that will guide their choices as well as the decisions societies make. And that depends upon our own alliance of values being articulated, given meaning, taking root.

In President Havel's eloquent words: "we are not accountable solely to our party, our voters, our lobbies and our state, but in fact to the entire human race, including those who come after us, and that the decision on the worth of our deeds will ultimately be made beyond the realm of the mortals around us. In the language of today's world, this means nothing more than to harken, in our various dilemmas, to the voice that speaks to us from the depths of our conscience."

That voice is now free to speak. Let it speak. Let it speak of the values and ideals that brought us to this point and that should guide us now into the future that awaits.

May God Bless my country and yours. And may God Bless our common cause.

* * *

Following is a transcript of introductory remarks by U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright today at RFE/RL headquarters in Prague:

Thank you very much. As someone who was born in Prague, it is a great pleasure to visit the new headquarters of Radio Free Europe in this city. And you can only imagine what a special feeling it is for me to be here with America's spectacular first lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and to introduce her to Central Europe's spectacular first city.

It is a special privilege for this Czech-American to introduce the man who did so much to bring this historic broadcasting facility to the Czech Republic and who indeed has done as much as anyone to ensure the survival of Radio Free Europe in the post-Cold War era. That man is Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic.

**REMARKS
BY AMBASSADOR BILL RICHARDSON
TO THE BELLERIVE/GLOBE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
"POLICING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY:
WHY, HOW AND FOR WHOM?"
GENEVA, MARCH 25, 1998**

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY COMMENDING HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN AND THE BELLERIVE FOUNDATION AS WELL AS TOM SPENCER AND GLOBE INTERNATIONAL FOR ORGANIZING THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE. THE CONVERSATION CONCERNS ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL ISSUES FACING HUMANITY AS WE ENTER A NEW MILLENNIUM: GLOBALIZATION. THE PERSONS THAT HAVE BEEN PULLED TOGETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CONVERSATION ARE TRULY IMPRESSIVE, AND IMPORTANTLY, THEY REPRESENT A RANGE OF BACKGROUNDS AND VIEWPOINTS THAT ALL TOO OFTEN IS MISSING FROM OTHER GATHERINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF GLOBALIZATION. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DISCUSSION THUS FAR HAS BEEN SO LIVELY AND AT TIMES SO INTELLECTUALLY PROVOCATIVE, THAT ONE WONDERS IF NEXT YEAR IN DAVOS, PEOPLE WILL BE MULLING OVER THE INFLUENCE OF "THE GENEVA CULTURE". OR MAYBE THEY'LL REFER TO IT AS THE "AGA KAHN CULTURE".

WHEN WE SPEAK OF GLOBALIZATION, THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND IS THE GLOBALIZED ECONOMY, WITH INCREASING INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GOODS AND SERVICES. THE RECENT TURMOIL IN WORLD FINANCIAL MARKETS HAS ALSO BROUGHT HOME TO US ALL HOW INTER-RELATED THE WORLD FINANCIAL SYSTEM HAS BECOME.

THIS, HOWEVER, IS ONLY PART OF THE PICTURE. WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN TELECOMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION, WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE INTERNET, WE ARE SEEING INCREASING GLOBALIZATION IN ALL AREAS OF HUMAN ACTIVITY, INCLUDING THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SPHERES.

AS A RESULT OF THE SCALE, SCOPE AND SPEED OF GLOBALIZATION, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES HAVE RECEIVED INCREASING ATTENTION. WE HAVE COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT SOME OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE, ARE GLOBAL IN NATURE. WE ALL CAUSE THE PROBLEM WITH OUR ACTIONS WHICH RESULT

IN EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES. WE WILL ALL BE AFFECTED BY THE CONSEQUENCES -- SEA LEVEL RISE, TEMPERATURE CHANGES, MODIFICATIONS IN THE AREAS IN WHICH VECTOR BORN DISEASES THRIVE. WE MUST ALL WORK TOGETHER TO TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION.

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS ARE GLOBAL IN THAT THEY EXIST IN ALL REGIONS OF THE WORLD, BUT ARE ESSENTIALLY REGIONAL OR LOCAL PROBLEMS, FOR EXAMPLE, DIMINISHING SUPPLIES OF FRESH WATER. WE HAVE COUNTRIES, OR LOCALITIES WITHIN COUNTRIES, IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD WHICH DO NOT HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO POTABLE WATER. AS A RESULT, FRESH

WATER NEEDS TO BE MANAGED ON A LOCAL OR REGIONAL BASIS, BASED ON THE NATURAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE AREA. AS WE IN THE U.S. KNOW, REDUCING WATER USAGE IN THE NORTHEAST ISN'T GOING TO CHANGE THE FACT THAT NEW MEXICO HAS LIMITED WATER RESOURCES.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS DEVELOPED A HOPEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. FOR TRULY GLOBAL PROBLEMS, SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE, COUNTRIES ARE DEVELOPING A SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. FOR REGIONAL AND LOCAL PROBLEMS WHICH EXIST ACROSS A RANGE OF COUNTRIES, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN SHARE EXPERIENCES AND FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY TO ADDRESS THE MATTER.

I BELIEVE WE HAVE DEVELOPED A USEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING THE OTHER SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF GLOBALIZATION AS WELL. GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD HAVE RECOGNIZED THAT GLOBALIZATION TOUCHES ALL AREAS OF OUR LIVES. SIGNIFICANTLY, IN RECENT YEARS, THEY HAVE COME TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY A NUMBER OF THE CHALLENGES WHICH WE, AS A GLOBAL COMMUNITY, FACE. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, GOVERNMENTS AND NGOS HAVE COME TOGETHER IN RIO, IN VIENNA, IN CAIRO, IN COPENHAGEN, AND IN BEIJING

TO CARVE OUT WHAT AMOUNTS TO A FUNDAMENTALLY NEW GLOBAL CONSENSUS ON ISSUES SUCH AS ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, POPULATION, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. LET ME EMPHASIZE THAT THIS IS A GLOBAL CONSENSUS-- NOT A WESTERN, NOT A DEVELOPED COUNTRY, NOT A DAVOS CONSENSUS -- BUT A GLOBAL CONSENSUS.

AMONG THE POINTS ON WHICH WE ALL AGREE IS THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO POLICY-MAKING AT ALL LEVELS -- ONE WHICH REFLECTS THE INTERLINKED NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS WE ARE ADDRESSING. ONE WHICH CONSIDERS THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF ECONOMIC POLICY-MAKING. ONE WHICH CONSIDERS THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY-MAKING.

WE AGREE ON WHAT TYPE OF AN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM WE ARE FACING -- ONE WHICH REWARDS OPEN MARKETS AND FREE TRADE.

WE ALL AGREE THAT GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY, RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND WOMEN'S FULL PARTICIPATION ARE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT -- NOT JUST IN ACHIEVING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

I BELIEVE THAT THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIVE MAJOR UN CONFERENCES PROVIDE THE FRAMEWORK WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT CENTURY. I WOULD LIKE TO ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT WITH A FEW EXAMPLES.

FIRST, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER A BIT THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS, A KEY ELEMENT IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. RIGHT NOW, WE ARE CELEBRATING THE FIFTIETH

ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND. THE KEY WORD HERE IS "UNIVERSAL", WHICH REQUIRES THAT WE EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF FULL HUMAN DIGNITY TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY.

EXCEPTIONS TO THIS PRINCIPLE UNDERMINE THE DIGNITY OF ALL. THE EVIDENCE OF HISTORY IS IN: HUMAN RIGHTS ARE INTEGRAL TO THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND SECURITY, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIAL EQUITY. WITHOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, WE CANNOT MOVE FORWARD AS A GLOBAL COMMUNITY. WE RECOGNIZE THE TOTALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROCLAIMED BY THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THAT MEANS CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS. THE VIENNA DECLARATION REAFFIRMED WITHOUT DISSENT THAT "ALL HUMAN RIGHTS ARE UNIVERSAL, INDIVISIBLE, INTERDEPENDENT AND INTER-RELATED".

DESPITE PROGRESS OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS, THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM ACROSS EASTERN EUROPE AND THE DEMISE OF COLONIALISM, WE STILL HAVE A WAY TO GO TO INCLUDE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE IN THE CIRCLE OF HUMAN DIGNITY - A WORLD IN WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED ON A DAILY BASIS, IN ALL SITUATIONS, IN ALL COUNTRIES. IN THE UN SYSTEM, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAS IDENTIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS AS CUTTING ACROSS THE FOUR FIELDS OF THE SECRETARIAT'S PROGRAMS: PEACE AND SECURITY, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS. WE SUPPORT MARY ROBINSON'S EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH LINKS WITH OTHER UN AGENCIES AND THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS TO MAKE HUMAN RIGHTS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THEIR PROGRAMS. HER WORK AND THAT OF HER STAFF UNDERSCORE THE IMPORTANCE OF A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVING TRUE UNIVERSALITY IN HUMAN RIGHTS. WE COMMEND THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND HER STAFF FOR THEIR TIRELESS WORK TO ENHANCE UN HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMS AND ADVISORY SERVICES FOR TRAINING, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY. THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH MARY ROBINSON AND HER STAFF TO IMPROVE THE UN'S ABILITY TO DEAL WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS.

NEXT, I'D LIKE TO TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO THE TOPIC OF CORE LABOR STANDARDS -- A TOPIC THAT EMBRACES BOTH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ELEMENTS. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING CONDITIONS OF LABORERS, BOTH ON A HUMANITARIAN LEVEL AND AS A MATTER OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS. COUNTRIES ARE ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE BY DEVELOPING A SET OF CORE LABOR STANDARDS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION. WE HAVE REACHED INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, PROHIBITION OF FORCED AND CHILD LABOR, AND PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION.

WE HAVE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT SIMPLY OUTLINING THE STANDARDS IS NOT ENOUGH. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT WE NEED A MECHANISM TO MONITOR AND PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE STANDARDS. TO THIS END, WE HAVE BEEN EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM WHICH

WILL PROVIDE INTERNATIONAL MONITORING AND REPORTING ON COMPLIANCE IN THE ILO. THE UN SYSTEM PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK FOR THESE DISCUSSIONS. IT PROVIDES THE EXPERTISE NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A MONITORING SYSTEM WHICH WILL WORK. THE UNITED STATES STRONGLY SUPPORTS THESE EFFORTS, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME AT THE ILO MEETING IN JUNE.

ANOTHER AREA IN WHICH WE HAVE ACHIEVED AGREEMENT ON THE CHALLENGES AND ON A WAY FORWARD IS THAT OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND POPULATION. THIS SUBJECT TOUCHES ON ALL THREE OF THE INTERLINKED ELEMENTS OF GLOBALIZATION -- SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL. THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN ARE SELF-EVIDENT, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THE IMPACT OF WOMEN RIGHTS AND POPULATION ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION HAVE NOT ALWAYS RECEIVED THE ATTENTION THEY MERIT. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, PROGRAMS SUCH AS THOSE RUN BY THE GRAMEEN BANK IN BANGLADESH PROVIDE SMALL SCALE LOANS TO INDIVIDUALS NOT SERVICED BY LARGER COMMERCIAL BANKS.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF MICROCREDIT RECIPIENTS ARE WOMEN, WHO USE THESE FUNDS TO IMPROVE THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION, OFTEN EXPANDING SMALL-SCALE PRODUCTION AND GENERATING INCOME -- AND, INCIDENTALLY, REPAYING THE LOANS WITH A LOW DEFAULT RATE THAT LEAVES COMMERCIAL BANKS ENVIOUS.

ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL FRONT, INCREASED ATTENTION TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN, INCLUDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE HAVE LED HISTORICALLY TO LOWER POPULATION GROWTH RATES. STUDY AFTER STUDY HAS SHOWN THAT INCREASING POPULATION IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS, PUTTING PRESSURE ON DELICATE ECOSYSTEMS AS COMMUNITIES ATTEMPT TO MEET THE VERY REAL, BASIC FOOD AND SHELTER NEEDS OF THEIR CITIZENS. BY ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN FOR HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION, WE CAN ALSO PRODUCE BENEFITS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

ONCE AGAIN, THE UN SYSTEM PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN THE AREA OF WOMEN'S ISSUES. THROUGH THE BEIJING AND CAIRO CONFERENCES, THE UN SYSTEM SUPPORTED THE EFFORTS OF ALL OF US TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE ISSUES AND ON THE WAY FORWARD. THE UN SYSTEM -- ALL OF ITS AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS -- PROMOTE THE GOALS OF THE CONFERENCES. PERHAPS EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE UN IS WORKING HARD TO PROVIDE A POSITIVE EXAMPLE BY INCLUDING WOMEN IN HIGH-LEVEL, DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS.

THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTS THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF BEIJING, CAIRO AND COPENHAGEN. WE ARE WORKING BOTH WITH THE UN SYSTEM AND BILATERALLY TO CARRY OUT THE ACTIONS OUTLINED IN THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS OF ACTION. WE WILL CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND AGREEMENT EMBODIED IN THESE DOCUMENTS.

FINALLY, I'D LIKE TO RETURN TO ONE OF MY EARLIER STATEMENTS. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, WITH THE ESSENTIAL SUPPORT OF THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE, HAS TAKEN TWO MAJOR STEPS

FORWARD IN DEALING WITH THE GLOBALIZED SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC WORLD IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES. TOGETHER, WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE MAJOR CHALLENGES WHICH WE FACE AND TOGETHER, WE ADDRESSED THEM IN RIO, VIENNA, CAIRO, COPENHAGEN AND BEIJING. OUR SECOND STEP FORWARD WAS REACHING AGREEMENT ON HOW WE SHOULD APPROACH THESE CHALLENGES. THE RESULT IS AN AGREED-UPON FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES OF THE NEXT CENTURY.

NOW, WE MOVE ON TO THE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TASK OF IMPLEMENTATION. RATHER THAN SPEND OUR LIMITED TIME, EFFORT AND RESOURCES ON DEVELOPING NEW MECHANISMS AND BODIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD GET ON WITH THE TASK AT HAND: USING THE FRAMEWORK WE'VE GOT TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENTS WE'VE REACHED AS WE MOVE INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

THANK YOU.



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PRESS RELEASE

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

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STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BILL RICHARDSON
UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
TO THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

MARCH 25, 1998

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**Ambassador Bill Richardson
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations**

**Address to UN Commission on Human Rights
March 25 1998
Geneva**

Geneva -- Ambassador Bill Richardson, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has called on the leaders of the former Republic of Yugoslavia to enter into a real dialogue on the future of Kosovo and has demanded full and immediate access to Kosovo by representatives of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

In a March 25 address to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Richardson also said the United States is "outraged" by the massacres of innocent civilians over the past year in Algeria, and called for a "credible, independent verification of the facts."

The Dayton Accords have set the former Yugoslavia on the path towards a more stable future, but that "fragile progress" stands in contrast to "the situation in Kosovo, where in recent weeks the conscience of the world has been outraged by reports of summary executions by Serbian police."

There can be no justification for the shelling of villages, the burning of houses and the murder of innocent men, women and children, all of which we are seeing in Kosovo," he said.

"We saw what can result from ethnic intolerance and violence earlier in this decade in the former Yugoslavia," he said. "The international community failed to respond effectively then. We must not repeat that mistake today."

"The international community must not tolerate the brutal use of force as a means for solving domestic problems. We believe that the leaders of the former Republic of Yugoslavia must enter into a real dialogue on the future of Kosovo. Moreover, full and immediate access to Kosovo by representatives and rapporteurs of the Human Rights Commission is imperative."

In Algeria, there is a "paramount need" for a "credible, independent, verification of the facts," Richardson said. "The United Nations must be willing and able to help Algeria meet its human rights obligations in the face of appalling terrorist atrocities."

Richardson welcomed the access the Algerian government has given to international journalists, parliamentarians and others but said visits to Algeria by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Summary, Extrajudicial and Arbitrary Executions, or by international non-governmental groups, would "be a positive step for improving transparency in Algeria."

"The United States along with the international community has been outraged by the massacres of innocent civilians over the past year in Algeria," he said. "So-called Islamic terrorists are murdering thousands of innocent people."

The full text of Ambassador Richardson's speech follows:

Mr. Chairman, permit me to say that your presence on the podium is an inspiration to all of us who have witnessed South Africa's remarkable transformation.

As a representative of the United States of America, I am honored to address the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in this year that we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Human rights and respect for the fundamental dignity and freedom of each human being lie at the heart of the American experience.

More than 200 years ago, America was born out of the crucible of religious persecution and political tyranny. From the first days of our republic, the notion that all Americans were extended certain natural and inalienable rights became a fundamental element of our national character.

But human rights are by no means an American creation. The universality of human rights has been advanced for millennia by each of the world's great cultural and spiritual traditions.

Fifty years ago, at the conclusion of a World War that brought humankind face to face with its own capacity for evil, this Commission gathered to enshrine the birthright of each person into a common, global standard accepted by all nations -- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Declaration, we must recommit ourselves to this ideal of universality. And even as we celebrate national, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity throughout the world, we must reject the efforts of cynical political leaders who seek to cloak themselves in the mantle of cultural or religious tradition to justify abuses of basic rights.

We must also reject the idea that abuses are justified by the imperative of economic growth and development. In fact, Mr. Chairman, the experience of our time shows that sustainable development and sustainable democracy go hand in hand.

We believe that economic and social rights such as freedom from hunger and the freedom to achieve an adequate standard of living, are fundamental to the dignity of each individual. We are committed to their progressive realization in the context of protecting and promoting all basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

America understands from its own history that democracy and freedom remain ongoing processes. We are cognizant that our Founding Fathers, who declared "all men are created equal," purposely excluded women and condoned the barbarism of slavery.

But ours is a nation that has worked tirelessly not only to correct the sins of the past, but to bring the opportunities of freedom and democracy to all people.

As a nation whose foreign policy is animated by a commitment to the principles of respect for law, human dignity and freedom, we are heartened by the realization of these aspirations in more and more countries.

In fact, we have witnessed significant progress' in every region, and more than one half the world's populations now live under governments of their own choosing.

As President Clinton said commemorating Human Rights Day last year, the thirty articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have entered the consciousness of people all around the world. They are now invoked routinely in constitutions and courts, and they set a yardstick of humanity's "best practices" against which we must all now measure ourselves.

At the same time, egregious abuses continue in many countries, and tremendous human rights challenges remain. To be sure, the political and economic context in which abuses occur has varied over time. However, our principles -- and our obligation to insist on respect for the universal standards that inform the work of this body -- remain constant.

In the former Yugoslavia where communist authorities once exerted tight controls over the civil and political affairs of their people, we now confront abuses in the context of ethnic and civil conflict. Not far from this conference hall, we have witnessed all too effective efforts to promote fear and hatred through the manipulation of ethnic politics.

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, a fragile peace has slowly begun to take hold in Bosnia, and the human rights violations of the past are giving way to a new spirit of reconciliation and the prospect of a more peaceful and stable future.

The fragile progress, however, stands in contrast to the situation in Kosovo, where in recent weeks the conscience of the world has been outraged by reports of summary executions by Serbian police.

There can be no justification for the shelling of villages, the burning of houses and the murder of innocent men, women and children all of which we are seeing in Kosovo. We saw what can result from ethnic intolerance and violence earlier in this decade in the former Yugoslavia.

The international community failed to respond effectively then. We must not repeat that mistake today.

The international community must not tolerate the brutal use of force as a means for solving domestic problems. We believe that the leaders of the former Republic of Yugoslavia must enter into a real dialogue on the future of Kosovo. Moreover, full and immediate access to Kosovo by representatives and rapporteurs of the Human Rights Commission is imperative.

Mr. Chairman, in recent years, the increasing incidence of civil conflict has elevated the importance of human rights monitors receiving access to troubled areas. Such monitors play a critical role in deterring abuses and establishing accountability. This is why the United States has strongly supported the efforts of UN monitors in Central Africa, and why we continue to urge the Government of the Congo to permit the UN Secretary General's Investigative Team to perform its mission.

The United States, along with the international community, has been outraged by the massacres of innocent civilians over the past year in Algeria. So-called Islamic terrorists are murdering thousands of innocent people. Women and children are not being spared from this unspeakable horror, with young women often being taken hostage and held in cruel and inhumane captivity.

The United States condemns these monstrous crimes. There are many allegations inside Algeria about the killings, and the paramount need is for a credible, independent verification of the facts.

The United Nations must be willing and able to help Algeria meet its human rights obligations in the face of appalling terrorist atrocities. We welcome the access that the Algerian government is affording to international journalists, parliamentarians and others.

Broadening and deepening such cooperation would serve an important step forward. In our view, a visit to Algeria by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Summary, Extrajudicial and Arbitrary Executions and by international NGO groups would be a positive step for improving transparency in Algeria.

Algeria has made progress toward building a multiparty democracy, but many Algerians have yet to reject violence as a political tool. The best hope for Algeria's future is to include in a credible political process all those who renounce violence and embrace democratic norms.

Mr. Chairman, a third new human rights challenge is ensuring that civil and political rights -- and human rights institutions that are critical to the development of any modern society -- are no less a priority than the remarkable economic progress that many states have enjoyed. In this respect, there may be no more appropriate example than the case of China.

As I noted earlier, the question of universality applies to each and every human being, and the people of the People's Republic of China are no exception.

Over the past year, China has engaged in a dialogue with the United States and others on the issue of human rights. Dialogue is an important first step, but let us be clear -- it is no substitute for action.

In particular, we have begun constructive discussions with Chinese officials about the rule of law, and we note Chinese efforts to implement legal reforms.

But rule of law is more than rule by law -- law must be used impartially and effectively to guarantee and protect internationally-recognized human rights. The rule of law cannot be distorted by the needs of any political party and no individual can act above the law itself.

The government of China has announced it will accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We welcome this step, which commits China to ending some of its serious human rights violations, and hope signature occurs soon.

This commitment to meeting the provisions of the Covenant means that the Chinese will be voluntarily reporting, and permitting experts to examine, its practices. We regard this as an important step forward, and we will be watching closely to ensure that the process works effectively and that it produces genuine results.

Mr. Chairman, the Covenant that China is preparing to sign provides that all its citizens must have freedom of expression, and it prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention, torture or cruel and degrading punishment, and arbitrary or unlawful interference with family, home or correspondence.

The Covenant is clear in stating that minorities shall not be denied the right to their own culture, religion or language.

And, under provisions of the Covenant, China will be required to allow all its citizens freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion.

Although these rights are fundamental elements of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and although they are accepted standards throughout the world, they are still repeatedly violated throughout China.

Citizens who publicly criticize the government, ruling party, or the leadership are subject to harassment, arrest and imprisonment.

There remain in China over 2000 persons imprisoned for "counter revolutionary offenses." We believe these cases should be reviewed, and that prisoners who have done nothing more than exercise their rights should be released. In this regard, we welcome the recent release of Wei Jingsheng and several other dissidents, and hope these will be followed by further releases.

Beyond imprisonment for counter-revolution, thousands are detained without trial for up to three years in "reeducation through labor camps."

Despite laws to the contrary, torture or cruel and degrading punishment continues to occur.

China's people do not enjoy the right to choose their leaders in free elections above the village level.

Ethnic Tibetans live under social and political controls threatening Tibet's unique cultural, religious and linguistic heritage.

And, the Chinese government restricts religious practices and in many cases, threatens, intimidates and detains members of unregistered churches.

We urge China to correct these abuses and to make its laws conform with the standards of the International Covenants. If it follows such a course, China, like other states, will find there is no inconsistency between its goal of social stability and ideal of liberty and freedom. On the contrary, the two are mutually reinforcing.

Mr. Chairman, beyond these human rights challenges, the international community is increasingly aware of the connection between repression at home and illegality abroad. There is perhaps no better example than the case of Iraq, where Saddam Hussein has ruthlessly repressed all challenges to his regime, real or imagined. Because he is unaccountable to the people he rules, Saddam Hussein has license to pursue policies that flout international norms and UN Security Council resolutions and are inimicable to the interests of the Iraqi people.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the recent and remarkable progress in democratization around the world must not make us complacent about those recalcitrant governments that have resisted change. Cuba is perhaps the most visible example of such a government, as it remains the only one in the Western Hemisphere that does not elect its political leadership, and continues to systematically violate the rights of its people.

Burma is another, and we in the international community must continue to urge its rulers to respect the human rights of its citizens and engage in political dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi.

Of course, our efforts do not end there. Today, President Clinton will be in Rwanda, where he will pay tribute to the courage and bravery of the survivors of genocide, and underscore my government's commitment to oppose such horrendous abuses wherever and whenever they occur.

Even as he does so, and even as he recognizes the remarkable democratic transformations that have taken place in Africa, severe human rights abuses continue in many parts of the continent. We must continue to press those governments in the region that have resisted

the democratic tide, as well as urge leaders in other parts of Africa to ensure that fragile democracies are nourished. In continuing to speak out against abuses and urging reform, we keep faith with those individuals and groups that are seeking to promote the rights reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr. Chairman, this century has been one of great contrasts: We have seen men and women journey through outer space and we have seen opportunity, freedom and self-determination spread to the four corners of the Earth.

Yet, at the same time, we have seen humankind plumb the depths of its own potential for evil and inhumanity.

Today, we possess a unique opportunity and responsibility to learn from the lessons of this, the bloodiest of all centuries.

As we have for the past 50 years, we must continue to be guided by the lodestar of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We must redouble our commitment to the promotion and protection of the fundamental freedoms and rights laid out in that document.

Only then will equal justice, equal opportunity and equal dignity without discrimination be a reality for all the people of the world.

Thank you.

(End text)