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Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony in Mexico City, Mexico

May 6, 1997

President and Mrs. Zedillo, members of the Mexican Government, citizens of Mexico, *saludos, amigos.* I am delighted to be in Mexico, rich with history, culture, and beauty, and most of all, a great and good people who have given so much to the world.

In 1943, the Presidents of our countries exchanged visits in Monterrey and Corpus Christi, launching a tradition of Presidential meetings we carry forward today. President Roosevelt noted, in that dark night of war, that our people had found they had common aspirations and could work for a common objective. Today, at the dawn of a new century, in a very different time, we still have common aspirations and we must work for a common objective, for the partnership between our two great nations has never been more important.

Powerful currents of commerce and culture pull us closer together. A growing convergence of values and vision gives our friendship new force. Mexico is opening democracy's doors, embarking on bold economic reform, decentralizing power, and giving new voice to its citizens, communities, and regions.

The success of Mexico's endeavors matters to the United States of America. Our nations share far more than a common border; we share common challenges and common opportunities as we move toward a new century. We must meet the future together, respecting each other's uniqueness but knowing that in today's world, cooperation is the surest path to security, prosperity, and peace.

We are reaping the benefits of more open trade and working toward a wider community of stable, free-market democracies throughout the Americas. We want a 21st century where economic growth creates more and better jobs, where a good education and a clean environment are the birthright of every child, where we conquer our common enemies of drugs and crime, where accountable governments provide the tools for people to make the most of their own lives. Our challenges are great, but so is our resolve.

President Zedillo, I thank you for taking some time last night to show me through the remarkable museum containing the ancient heritage of Mexico. Here in the heart of modern Mexico, the remnants of a remarkable ancient civilization rise up through the city's foundations. Your great writer Carlos Fuentes has written, ''The greatness of Mexico is that its past is always alive.''

But, Mr. President, just as alive and just as great is the vitality of Mexico's present and the promise of its future. I have seen it in the bold leadership you have exerted, in the vibrant debate going on in your country, in the strong efforts made by the ordinary citizens of Mexico. Mexico's promise for the future is seen in the hands of its working people, in the efforts of those working to deepen democracy, in the talent of its writers and artists, and most of all, in the faces of the children here today.

Mr. President, our histories and our destinies are forever joined. Let us reach across our common frontier to embrace our tomorrows together, to enter the 21st century as valued partners and trusted friends.

Again, thank you for making Hillary and me and our party feel so welcome. And thank you for the future we are building together.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:28 a.m. at Campo Marte. In his remarks, he referred to President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and his wife, Anilda Patricia.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico in Mexico City
May 6, 1997

Mexico-U.S. Antidrug Efforts

Q. President Zedillo, could you——

President Zedillo. The press conference will be later on, and I'll be delighted to answer there any questions.

Q. Well, while we've got this opportunity, let me just clarify what the Mexican Government's position is on DEA agents being allowed——

President Zedillo. No, we'll talk about that in the press conference. Now we have to have our private conservation, and I have spoken about that before.

Thank you.

Q. Do you want DEA agents to stay here——

President Zedillo. We'll speak about all of those issues later.

President's Visit

Q. Mr. President, are you sorry you waited until the 5th year of your Presidency to come to Mexico?

President Clinton. I'm just glad to be here now. You know, we've had—I'm coming to Latin America 3 times in less than a year, and in the first term I did a lot of work on it. You know, we had the Summit of the Americas, and we had a lot of involvement with Mexico with NAFTA and the difficulty with the peso, so I think we've had a lot of very close contact. And I'm glad to be here. I like it here.

Mexico-U.S. Antidrug Efforts

Q. Mr. President, can you assure DEA agents that they'll be safe here?

President Clinton. We're going to have a press conference later. We'll answer all—on all of the decisions and stuff.

Stock Market

Q. What do you think of the stock market soaring past 7,000?

President Clinton. Americans are happy. They ought to be. The country's doing well. We're going to do better.

Q. Do you think your budget deal is responsible?

President Clinton. It didn't hurt. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:10 a.m. on the Veranda of the Residence at Los Pinos Presidential Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Receiving the Binational Commission Report in Mexico City
May 6, 1997

Well, thank you very much. Members of the Mexican Cabinet and the American Cabinet, thank you for your reports and for the specific concrete efforts that you are making to move our relationship forward and to help our peoples.

Secretary Albright commented that the work of the Binational Commission was so broad because our relationship is so broad. This is a truly extraordinary thing to have this many people in our Cabinet, this many people in your Cabinet all working together on a broad range of issues.

Let me say, Mr. President, as you know, I'm particularly gratified also to be joined here by strong bipartisan delegations from the United States Congress that are here from many States along the border, as well as Governor Miller of Nevada, the chairman of the Governors' association in the United States. So we're here because we know that we have to make this relationship work together beyond party politics, within our countries and across our borders.

In the 21st century, we want our border to be our bond, and we want it to be rooted in a mutual commitment to the exchange of people and commerce across the border and to our