

Now, it is important for all of us to stop looking backward and start thinking forward about the future we want to build for our children. More than half the people of your nation today are under the age of 20. The same is true in Guatemala and Nicaragua and across Central America. These young people with no adult memories of war will not be defined by the need to take sides in a bitter struggle between two ideological extremes.

Instead, they will come of age in the 21st century with the unquestioned right to choose their leaders and shape their destinies. Now they will use that right, I believe, to demand of their representatives better education, good jobs, fair justice, clean water, safe streets. They will want the things that will give them the tools to live their own dreams, that can help them to give value and meaning to their lives.

I believe we have a solemn obligation to make democracy deliver for them so they will see a bright future, a future that is their future here in Central America. *Juntos para un mejor futuro. Se lo debemos a los fallecidos; se lo debemos a nuestros hijos.* We owe it to the fallen; we owe it to our children.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Legislative Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Legislative Assembly President Juan Duch; Supreme Court President Eduardo Tenorio; and President-elect Francisco Flores and President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Arrival in Guatemala City, Guatemala

March 10, 1999

Mr. President, representatives of the Guatemalan Government and people, we thank you for your warm welcome. I am honored to have the chance to be greeted here, in a place that recalls both Guatemala's marvelous cultural heritage and its past of conflicts and pain.

And I am especially grateful for the chance to meet you today, at a time when Guatemala is building a future of democracy, reconciliation, and peace. You have ended a cruel war. You have given your people—all your people—a chance to shape their destiny and to stand on their own. You have faced the past with candor and found the courage to move forward. You are teaching the world that no conflict is so bitter, no gulf is so wide that it cannot be overcome by the power of good government and by people of good will.

In a few moments, I will have the opportunity to discuss, with a broad range of Guatemalan citizens, the progress of peace in your country.

I will reaffirm America's commitment to shed light on the dark events of the past, so that they are never repeated, and to help you implement the peace accords in a way that ensures that the human rights of the Guatemalan people are always respected.

Tomorrow I will meet with President Arzu, and we will join with the leaders of Central America in a summit in Antigua to continue our efforts to build in this hemisphere a community of true democracies in which all our nations finally can prosper together. That is our common goal. *Lo lograremos como socios y como amigos.*

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. in the courtyard at the National Palace of Culture. In his remarks, he referred to President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala.