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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS TO THE PERA CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 22, 1995**

It gives me great pleasure to join all of you gathered today for the first convening of the Partnership for Education Revitalization in the Americas -- PERA. I was proud to formally announce USAID support for PERA during my recent trip to Latin America. PERA follows up on commitments made in Miami at the Summit of the Americas, where the democratically elected leaders of our hemisphere pledged themselves and their governments to improve education for our hemisphere's children. Today, barely half of the children in Latin America complete elementary school. And far too few graduate from secondary school.

We all have a stake in improving education in the Americas, as education is central to a more prosperous, peaceful and democratic future. If the hemisphere is to sustain a dynamic, growing economy, the region's workforce must be able to compete successfully in the global economy and have the knowledge and technical skills to do so. If we are to lift young people of our hemisphere out of poverty, we must open classroom doors to all children. And if we are to nourish our democracies, we must ensure that every child, regardless of income, regardless of gender, regardless of ethnic background, has the opportunity to learn.

For that to occur, there must be a partnership among

business, governments, and non-governmental organizations to help reform education policies. We all have a role to play, for there is so much to be done. We must improve the quality of teaching and raise education standards; better manage our schools and assure adequate school financing; strengthen the education of women and girls and improve the access of indigenous families to education. And I am pleased that at the First Ladies Conference in Paraguay in October, as First Ladies, we committed ourselves to PERA and the hemispheric dialogue on education reform that it represents.

In every country there are a multitude of innovative concepts being developed and implemented to advance those goals. PERA can be a mechanism to identify those programs, to disseminate information about them to other countries, and to help generate financing from international financial institutions and from governments for replication. Our goal for PERA is to give children a chance to learn.

I look forward to hearing about the results of this first conference and of the PERA partnership in education. Thank you all for your commitment to this important undertaking.

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Additional Video Background

PERA Technical Meeting

You are scheduled to tape remarks for the first meeting on hemispheric implementation of PERA, the Partnership for Education Revitalization, which you formally launched in Paraguay. USAID will host this meeting December 4-6, 1995, in Washington at the Academy for Educational Development with approximately 150 people present. The meeting will bring together Health Ministers and Deputy Health Ministers from around the hemisphere, as well as leaders of NGOs, financial institutions and business, to discuss the nuts and bolts of how PERA will work. Madeleine Kunin will be present as the U.S. representative.

As you may recall, PERA is a commitment from the Miami Summit of the Americas and is designed to help identify, disseminate and replicate innovative education reform programs throughout Latin America.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Video Remarks to the PERA Conference

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