



**Welcome Remarks by Ambassador Louise V. Oliver,
Permanent Delegate of the United States of America,
at the naming of N. Scott Momaday as
"UNESCO Artist for Peace"
May 12, 2004,
UNESCO Fontenoy headquarters**

Mr. Momaday Director-General Matsuura Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to be with you tonight to celebrate the selection of N. Scott Momaday as a UNESCO Artist for Peace--as an American UNESCO Artist for Peace. I, and my colleagues at the U.S. Mission to UNESCO, are proud that Mr. Momaday has been recognized by UNESCO with this honor.

My children are a product of the space age. They grew up influenced by Star Trek and fascinated by the idea of intergalactic travel to distant planets.

I, on the other hand, living in a city on the East Coast of America, grew up dreaming about the Wild West. I imagined myself on a horse, galloping across the prairies,, surrounded by herds of buffalo. I loved reading stories about the lives of Native Americans, and learning about their ideas and traditions. I was particularly struck by their holistic view of the world, with a passion for teaching.

Mr. Momaday, thank you for all you have done to restore the cultural identity of Native Americans, thereby enriching the lives of all Americans, and for your willingness to represent UNESCO as an Artist for Peace. UNESCO can only achieve its important mission of promoting peace and understanding throughout the world with the help and support of people like you.

Congratulations from us all, and especially from your fellow Americans. and by the intimate relationship that they seemed to have with the environment in which they lived, and with the buffalo that played such central role in their lives.

Today, the buffalo continues to play an important role in the lives of many Native Americans, only now it is the Buffalo Trust, Mr. Momaday's non-profit foundation which helps to protect, and revive Native American cultural heritage by using traditional and electronic communication technologies in Community Multimedia Centres to help young Native Americans rediscover their heritage.

Mr. Momaday's wonderful books, especially House Made of Dawn, have been particularly instrumental in preserving and celebrating the history, stories, and values of Native American communities in the United States. As an Artist for Peace, he will now be able to expand his horizons even farther by reaching out to indigenous communities in all parts of the world.

For most individuals, writing books and running a foundation would be a full-time job. But not for Mr. Momaday, He is also an artist, a poet, and a professor, with a passion for teaching.

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