



**Intervention by the Ambassador Louise V. Oliver,  
Permanent Delegate of the United States of America**

**UNESCO Executive Board, Programs and External Relations Commission  
April 23, 2003**

**Basic Science Program (Item 3.5.1)**

*Background: The Director General Reported to the Executive Board on the progress on an international basic sciences program.*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We appreciate this report on the process made on a basic sciences program, and fully support its important role in UNESCO's work. As mentioned in my statement on Tuesday [Opening of Plenary Address], we wonder if there might also be a role for engineering within this program.

We note that a UNESCO expert meeting entitled "International Focus: Engineering and Technology for Poverty Eradication" was held in Washington, D.C. on March 22-23. This meeting had as its goal the development and initiative on a program for action promoting the role, contribution, and awareness of the importance of engineering and technology for poverty eradication. Over forty speakers and participants from fifteen countries and twenty national, international, and non-governmental organizations took part in this first UNESCO meeting of this type to be held in the United States following the U.S. return to UNESCO on October, 2003.

As noted in our introductory statement [Opening of Plenary Address], there is a proposal supported by the American engineering community called "Engineering for a Better World". We would welcome consideration of its inclusion in the IBS [International Basic Sciences] program.

We will be discussing this initiative with the representatives of other countries, and hope that there will be broad-based support for this results-based proposal which has a particular focus on strengthening human and institutional capacity in engineering and technology in developing and developed countries through international cooperation. It will also help bridge the knowledge divide in this area by encouraging young people to work in this field.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.