



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

**Ribbon-cutting ceremony  
June 10, 2004  
Raphael building**

Director Williams, Ambassador Morella

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues, Friends

I am pleased that so many of you have joined us here today for the dedication of the new home of the US UNESCO and OECD Missions. For the past ten months I have been involved in three renovations: my residence in Washington, my residence in Paris and this office building. I have been wondering which of these renovations would be completed first. It now seems, thanks to the hard work of General Williams, and numerous people on both sides of the Atlantic, that this beautiful building has won that competition.

My colleagues at our Mission are particularly excited, as we have had to divide our existing office space in the bilateral Mission's Chancery into increasingly smaller units as our staff has expanded during the past few months.

Actually, I don't know what we would have done without the extraordinary support given by Ambassador Leach to our Mission as we have evolved from a UNESCO Observer Mission into an official permanent US Mission. On behalf of all of us at the UNESCO Mission, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to him.

As the old saying goes, what matters in real estate is three things: location, location, and location . . . and what a location we have here. I have a vision of Ambassador Morella and I sitting together on the terrace outside our offices, gazing out at the park, solving the problems of the world while we have lunch.

In fact, our new arrangements do present a unique opportunity to build on the synergies that exist between OECD and UNESCO as well as on the efficiencies that will result from having two Missions share office space.

Twenty years ago today, June 10, 1984, I was working in the White House for former President Ronald Reagan. Last night or to be more accurate, very early this morning, as I watched former President Reagan's horse-drawn casket move up Pennsylvania Avenue to the rotunda in the Capitol building, I thought about how much has changed in the past two decades, including the fact that the United States is once again a full member of UNESCO.

I also thought about the qualities that made former President Reagan one of the most respected and beloved Presidents of the twentieth century, as shown by the extraordinary number of Americans who are willing to stand in line for hours in order to have an opportunity to say good-bye to him – his ability to determine priorities and stick to them, his perseverance, his good humor, his natural optimism, and his pride in America.

He was also very low-keyed. When he left the White house for the last time as President, he was asked how he would characterize the eight years of his Presidency. He answered, "all in all, not bad, not bad at all."

This afternoon, as we look at this beautiful building, I join Ambassador Morella in thanking General Williams, as well as the many individuals from the State Department, the bi-lateral Embassy, and the UNESCO and OECD Missions who have assisted him, for having done such a wonderful job. And on this exciting day, as we prepare to move into our new home, I can think of no better way to compliment them than to say, all in all, not bad, not bad at all.

Thank you.