



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF OVERSEAS BUILDINGS OPERATIONS

INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP

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FROM

10:12 A.M. TO 11:55 A.M.

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. MUNIZ: I'd like to welcome everybody first, start off with a warm welcome to our IAG members. We have 17 of our 32 members here today which is great. Really an amazing group of people who have helped us so much in the last year. We're going to talk a little bit more about that.

Let me start with a transferred -- a little security briefing. Folks are going to tell you what - - Connie, I was looking for Connie. Connie is going to walk us through what we can and cannot do in this building.

MS. HINES: Good morning. Welcome to the IAG. I'm going to give you the safety and security briefing and it is brief.

As you have been informed in your packets that were sent out, there is no WiFi. You have to turn -- you can keep your laptops, your cell phones, your PDAs, but you have to turn off your WiFi in the building. Okay?

The other very important information is you do not leave this room without an escort. We have many people outside that are just waiting to take you to wherever you want to go for the visitors. If you need to make use of any of the facilities, please go to either door and there will be someone out there waiting for you to escort you.

Additionally, if there is an emergency in the building, we have four exits, highlighted red sign. You can make your way to either exit, any of the four exits and leave the building, go across the street to the 23rd Street entrance and you'll be told what to do from there.

Those are our safety and security

announcements. There are people all the way around this room. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any of us. Thank you.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you, Connie.

I also wanted to remind folks that we have somebody transcribing these proceedings. So when you speak, if you could hit a microphone. And I think we have somebody else walking around the room if folks have questions with a microphone as well.

Again, I want to welcome all of our IAG members. I wanted to welcome the over 300 attendees from industry, folks who work with us, who might be interested in working with us, who are interested in our work. We're very eager and pleased to have you here. Look forward to being able to connect a little bit.

We're going to have a little bit of time after this morning's session in the delegates lounge to introduce each other. And I also wanted to welcome

OBO management and staff who attend these events as well.

Why don't we start introducing folks around the table. I see your name tags, but I think for folks who are sitting around the room, they don't know everybody, everybody here. So if you could introduce yourself, but also talk about the organization you're with.

Why don't we start over here.

MR. WHITTAKER: Thank you.

My name is Jim Whittaker, and I'm president and CEO of Facility Engineering Associates. We are a local but national engineering firm focused on the built environment.

So we specialize in the post occupancy side of the equation. No more new design and construction, but we deal in the operations and maintenance side of evaluations, energy management, sustainability.

MS. TSIEN: Hello. I'm Billie Tsien, and

I'm partners with Tod Williams. And we are fortunate enough, we architects, to be working on the embassy in Mexico City which you will see later on with Davis Brody Bond.

MR. SWIFT: I am John Swift. And, actually, as of a couple weeks ago, I'm a principal with Buro Happold and we're a consulting engineering firm. It's a national firm, and I am in the Boston office leading that group.

MR. SCARPA: I'm Lawrence Scarpa, architect from Brooks and Scarpa, Los Angeles, California.

MR. REED: I'm Chris Reed. I'm the principal of Stoss Landscape Urbanism in Boston. We are landscape architects, urban designers, work generally in the public realm. I also teach at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

MR. OPPENHEIMER: I'm Nat Oppenheimer, executive vice president at Robert Silman Associates. We're structural engineers. We've got 130 people at

offices in New York, Washington, and Boston.

MR. MAYNE: I'm Hom Mayne, the principal at Morphosis, and I'm a -- I head up -- I'm the director of the Now Institute at UCLA which is an urban research group.

MS. LEHMAN-SMITH: I'm Debra Lehman-Smith, founding partner of LSN based here in Washington, D.C. And we're designers and architects.

MR. GALEN: I'm Timur Galen. I am a managing director at Goldman Sachs and I co-head our global corporate services and real estate group.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: I'm Adele Chatfield-Taylor, president emerita of the American Academy in Rome, the oldest American overseas centers for individual study and advanced research in the arts and humanities in the United States.

MR. BROWNING: I'm Bill Browning. I am a partner in Terrapin, Bright, Green which is a research and consulting firm working on ecological design,

human performance, and the built environment.

MR. BIERUT: I'm Michael Bierut. I'm a graphic designer and I'm a partner in the New York office of the international firm Pentagram.

MR. BETSKY: I'm Aaron Betsky. I'm an architecture critic and until the end of the month, the director of the Cincinnati Art Museum. After that, who knows?

MR. TOUSSAINT: I'm Joe Toussaint. I'm OBO managing director for program development and coordination directorate. We're responsible for design and engineering, cost management, project management, and special projects.

MR. RUMPF: Eric Rumpf. I'm the managing director of construction, facility, and security management of our overseas programs.

MR. JONES: I'm Casey Jones. I'm the newly arrived deputy director at OBO.

MS. MUNIZ: Again, Lydia Muniz, director of

the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

MS. TOWNSEND: Hi. Heather Townsend, deputy director responsible for the directorates of planning and real estate and operations.

MR. HOCHULI: I'm Jurg Hochuli, deputy director for resource management.

MR. MCNAMARA: I'm Patrick McNamara. I'm the managing director of planning and real estate.

MS. MUNIZ: So let's get started. Again, this is the end of our first year of the IAG which is again -- I think has been a great change for us. You've all participated, given a lot of time, a lot of thought. I believe 11 projects have been reviewed or there have been 11 reviews.

Let me rattle through some of those. Some of you know what they are. Some of you don't have sort of the vision of all of the reviews that have taken place and also for people in the audience.

The design reviews were our embassy in

Mexico City, again, very exciting project; a residential facility in Paris; our embassies in Pristina; in Harare. We are doing a major rehabilitation of our embassy in Manila and we are building a new consulate general in Erbil, Iraq.

Program reviews, these are reviews of our regular programs to see how they might be improved, things that we may not have explored that we should consider exploring.

You helped us with the second edition of the Guide to Green Embassies. Lessons learned and post-occupancy evaluations is the program that we have to look at our buildings after we've built them and we'd really like to improve that.

Early contractor involvement, something that we're also interested in and we think is going to be very critical given the new direction that we're going in with some of the finest architects in the country.

We also want to bring in some of the finest

builders and really make sure that we're working as partners in a project as opposed to disconnected contractors who take a project not having known how it was developed, the thinking behind it, and then tries to implement it. We think if we work together from the beginning, that's really going to improve our product. So that was early contractor involvement.

Real estate asset management, I know that we had a lot of help from Timur. So that was really wonderful.

We also had a roundtable on construction management and sort of the challenges, so what could we do in our program to make sure that we're really providing contractors with all the tools that they need to build on environments that are very different than they might be used to.

I think London, people understand how that would work. Paris, relatively clear. But when you start talking about things like Maputo, Juba, Harare,

it becomes complicated.

And so we need to be able to provide all the information we can and the support we can to contractors to make sure that they're successful and that they're working in partnership with our designers to design and build things that can actually be put together in these far parts of the world.

So those are a few of the reviews. Really, again, very grateful for all of the input that came in from those reviews. I think that our projects have been improved.

Our program folks that come to me after some of these reviews and talked about new ideas and having somebody ask a question or look at a process in a way that they hadn't really considered and that's really exactly what we want from the IAG.

We've done a lot, but we'd like to continue to strengthen the program. So we're going to show you about what we have done this year, but I'd also like

you to be thinking about what we would like to do moving forward.

We're going to talk about the next year, what are things that we could focus on, what might be areas of interest. We also have OBO management and OBO staff here, so we can have a conversation about where we might use your assistance.

Again -- we have accomplished a lot. Some of the things that we would like to focus on in the coming year are research and development, security, and innovation.

I think that what we have learned is that there are a lot of innovations, practices that are quite common in the U.S. market that are quite common in the commercial realm.

But, our program has been fairly fixed for a number of years. And so what we want to do is work with our colleagues in diplomatic security, work with great designers, work with great engineers who are

really an inextricable part of cracking the nut of innovation, engineering, and our buildings.

We have high performance standards.

Security is of the utmost importance to us, but that means an active partnership with designers, engineers, and construction firms who can look at this and understand how we put it together.

So that's something that we really want to focus on, an R&D agenda for the coming year. Any of your thoughts would be wonderful on that.

And, again, construction management and execution, we'd like to bring new contractors into our fold. We have some wonderful contractors that we work with on a regular basis, but competition is a good thing.

We realize that it can be a challenging environment to work overseas and we need to understand how to help firms break into our world and understand whether starting on a smaller project in a developed

country before makes sense before launching into a developing country where work and logistics can be more complicated.

Those are just a few of the things that I'd really like to talk about in the coming year.

Before we turn over, I think we put together -- rather than having me rattle through all of the projects that we have in design and construction, all of the sites that we've acquired, all the projects that we've awarded, we have put together a little video that shows the wide breadth of our work and show you what we have on our plate right now. But I did want to highlight a couple of very exciting new awards since our last meeting, our new selections.

Morphosis was selected to do our Embassy in Beirut. It is something that we're incredibly excited about, really looking forward to it.

And, of course, Beirut is symbolically, politically, culturally, but also from a security

point of view really of interest to the department, to the Hill.

No pressure, but we're thrilled and a lot of people are very excited to see that project really kick off. So, Tom, congratulations.

In Athens, Ann Beha -- I don't know if Ann is -- okay. We had some delayed flights from Boston, so we'll have some folks coming in. But we have a major renovation of our Gropius Building in Athens and a new building also being put on that site. So it's really sort of re-imagining of that entire embassy campus, if you will. Ann Beha was selected there.

We have a group of new IDIQs. I think we mentioned those the last time. They will be mentioned in the video as well. But we're really shifting in a new direction and we're learning a lot. We're trying to figure out what are the most important lessons to really make all of these projects successful.

We want to be successful. It's U.S.

taxpayer money. And so any advice, counsel, when we turn to you and say we're working through this issue, can you help us, it really is critical.

It really is the thing that will make this program successful and reinforce to folks who believe that great design means great facilities, sustainability, engineering is really what we should be doing in our facilities overseas.

Our facilities -- they're platforms that not only support the work of our diplomats overseas, are not only the places where citizens go when they need a passport or a student who needs a Visa to come study in the United States or our colleagues overseas who come to meet our American diplomats. These are not only platforms, but they're buildings.

They speak about who we are. And I think they send the message about what it is to be American thousands of times every day, not just to those people who come to those buildings to conduct business, but

to people who walk by in the street, who look over on their way to work and see a building and see the people coming in and out of it and think about the culture and the people who designed and who made that building a part of their community and the fabric of their city.

So this is something that I believe in. It's very important to me, and am truly grateful for your support in achieving this mission.

So why don't we turn over to our little video.

(Whereupon, a video is shown.)

MS. MUNIZ: Even I'm impressed by the breadth of work that we have going on at any one time.

(Applause.)

MS. MUNIZ: No. It is interesting. I mean, those are all in progress, right? So recent awards in design, in construction, acquisitions, it's really a wide, wide breadth of work, but I think it helps our

IAG members, but really the public appreciate the responsibilities that we have and how important it is to be efficient and effective in the way we do our work.

But it's wonderful to see that and wonderful to close with a note from Secretary Kerry. We will later this afternoon have a video. He had wanted to be part of this and then when he understood he couldn't had wanted to tape a video sort of talking really to the IAG about how important he believes this mission is.

And he was taken off to the Middle East which we agree is also important, and so he's taping this last minute and we're going to have this at about 12:00 this afternoon. He's going to tape at 12:30 and we'll have the tape for you this afternoon. Sorry that we couldn't have it for the larger group.

Let's go to our next agenda item. I think we're going to start with Sheila Kennedy. Perfect

timing. I looked over just a few minutes ago and I thought what if she can't make it in the door.

But, welcome. Wonderful to see you.

MS. KENNEDY: Thank you. Thank you, Lydia.

And thank you to the leadership team for the opportunity to serve. It's really been a pleasure.

So my charge is to very briefly summarize the OBO industry reviews and I'll ask any members who are present to confirm these notes if they so choose or to add a brief comment. So I'll begin with the design reviews.

The new U.S. embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, reviews were conducted in August and September of 2013 and the IAG members were John Gautry, myself, and Chris Reed, John from IBE Consulting Engineers and Chris Reed from Stoss Landscape Urbanism.

And AECOM was selected to design the new U.S. embassy in Harare. The complex includes a chancery office building, a U.S. Marine Corps

residence, support annex and multiple access pavilions, a warehouse and shops, and a utility building.

And I was asked to just briefly summarize kind of at a high level our experience as a group and then I'll ask Chris if he'd like to add any comments.

But it was a real pleasure to sit down and learn about this amazing site. And we had a presentation of what was described as a perfect environment in Harare, perfect environment for architecture.

We saw a very well-researched glimpse into the local culture of the building including amazing iconic ancient monuments like Grand Zimbabwe which is completely opaque, so solid, very secure stacked brick masonry.

And, of course, as a group, we found ourselves very much wanting and wishing that the landscape and the local material culture could find

its way into the project.

And so we launched into a set of really intriguing discussions on the design challenges of this embassy type: the technical building system issues, the security protocols and practices, but also the kind of larger cultural question that our group spent a little time with.

How is the U.S. reflected through design? Is that a static image? Is it changing? If so, how? How can we use the agency of design to kind of represent and express the mission of the United States?

And we found that AECOM had launched really the beginnings of a very powerful idea which was a transnational concept, in some ways, you know, very interesting and almost provocative, of using the land and the existing tree stands and the movement of the water in both the dry and the rainy seasons to kind of structure the site. At least that's what we thought

the potential of this idea was, to really drive the building geometries through water and create a very consistent and kind of locally intelligible language.

I'll conclude with five very quick points. We recommended the use of section as a design tool, particularly the kind of ha-ha that AECOM was working on to really open the courtyard of the embassy.

We talked about the socialization potentials of this building topology. How do people socialize in an embassy on a day-to-day basis and for special events and what role could the landscape and this courtyard play in relationship to the existing architectural programs?

We talked about the challenges that the embassy type presents for conventional striated forms of building delivery. And we advocated as a group a much more integrated approach to landscape, architecture, and engineering.

And, finally, we also recommended a new set

of representations, a kind of set of synthesizing diagrams that could coordinate the project's development going forward.

Chris, do you have anything to add to that?

MR. REED: I think that was quite good. I mean, most striking about the project, I think, was the site itself which was just outside the city. It was a large site and it did have a native landscape on it. So it was an opportunity there to work with that to create dialogues between the visitor and worker experience of the embassy and this fantastic native landscape setting that the project was in, so it's quite nice.

MS. KENNEDY: I'll just quickly read through the read-out summary then. There was also a new staff residence in Paris, France that was reviewed in April, May of 2013.

The IAG members were Mark Rios of Rios, Clementi, Hale Studios and the adjunct advisors are

Greg Otto of Buro Happold and Andrea Cochran of Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture.

Michael Maltzan Architects was awarded the design of a small residential project on the grounds of the U.S. ambassador's residence in Paris situated - it was situated off the Champs Elysees. And the project is located in a neighborhood with prominent architecture and landscape architecture.

The new U.S. embassy in Mexico City, in Mexico reviewed in May, June of 2013, IAG members were Aaron Betsky of the Cincinnati Art Museum. Also, the adjunct advisors were Stephen Kieran of KieranTimberlake and Julie Bargmann of D.I.R.T. Studio.

Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects and Davis Brody Bond Architects Joint Venture were selected to design the new U.S. embassy in the DF on the site of a former Colgate Palmolive factory in Nuevo Polanco district.

The new complex will include a chancery office building with a U.S. Marine Corps residence, a warehouse facility, support annex, multiple access pavilions, and underground parking for staff and official visitors.

Aaron, would you want to confirm or add anything?

MR. BETSKY: (No audible response.)

MS. KENNEDY: New U.S. embassy in Pristina, Kosovo, July, September 2013. Our IAG members were Nat Oppenheimer of Robert Silman Associates, Larry Scarpa, Brooks & Scarpa, Christy Ten Eyck of Ten Eyck Landscape Architects.

Davis Brody Bond Architects and Planners was selected to design the new U.S. embassy in Pristina. This new complex will include a chancery office building, a U.S. Marine Corps residence, multiple access pavilions, warehouse and shops, a utility building, recreational facilities, and parking for

official staff and visitor vehicles.

Next is a major rehabilitation of the U.S. embassy in Manila in the Philippines conducted December 2013. The IAG members on this are Ann Beha of Ann Beha Architects and the adjunct advisors are Zach McKown of TsAO & McKown Architects and Gunny Harboe of Harboe Architects.

ZGF was selected to provide design services for this major rehabilitation of the U.S. embassy in Manila and the project includes renovation of the chancery office building with historic preservation work as well as 2,000 square meters of new office space and demolition and replacement of existing wings.

I know Ann is here. Ann, do you want to confirm or add anything?

MS. BEHA: (No audible response.)

MS. KENNEDY: Ongoing. The new U.S. consulate general in Erbil, Iraq was conducted in the

January, February time frame of 2014. Our IAG members were Tod DeGarmo of Studios and the adjunct advisors were Jim McLeish of Lehman, Smith, McLeish and Susannah Drake of dland Studio.

EYP was selected to design the new U.S. consulate in Erbil. The new consulate general will be situated about eight miles from the city center and will include an office building, support facilities, parking, a community center, and staff representational housing.

And then concluding here in the category of program reviews, we have the new addition of OBO's Guide to Green Embassies which arrived in April 2013 after quite an effort. The IAG members are Bill Browning of Terrapin, Bright, Green, LLC and also Michael Bierut of Pentagonam and the adjunct advisor on this project is Penny Bonda of Ecoimpact Consulting.

OBO's energy and sustainable design unit better known as the green team developed a second

edition of Green Guide for Embassy and Consulate Operations which was originally published in 2007. The Green Guide is a tool for post implementation of best practice strategies to increase efficiency, reduce consumption, and promote the United States government's commitment to conservation through operations.

There was also lessons learned and post occupancy evaluations in July of 2013. And the IAG members involved there were Timur Galen, Goldman Sachs, Jim Whittaker Facility Engineering Associates, and adjunct advisors were Jay Farbstein of Farbstein & Associates.

This was a forum with subject matter experts and industry advisors to receive feedback and guidance on the Bureau's current lessons learned and post occupancy evaluation program.

The early contractor involvement program in September 2013, here the IAG members are Frank Sciame

of F.J. Sciame Construction and Richard Wood of Plaza Construction.

This is a forum with -- again, with subject matter experts and industry advisors on the importance of early contractor involvement in projects.

Rich, do you want to confirm -- I think Richard is here. Would you confirm or add anything to that?

MR. WOOD: We had a good discussion and culturally it's a new thing for OBO. I think this concept becomes more important as time goes on.

MS. KENNEDY: Uh-huh. Thank you.

In asset management, 2013 in January, the IAG members involved were Timur Galen of Goldman Sachs and adjunct advisors David Augarten of Tishman Speyer and Michael Norton also of Tishman Speyer and Chuck Waters of Hines. And this was a forum again with experts and industry advisors on asset management for the Bureau's real estate portfolio.

Then in March 2013, there was a construction roundtable. IAG members, Frank Sciame of Sciame Construction, Richard Wood of Plaza Construction were present, as well as adjunct advisors Warren Bryant of the Pernix Group, David Marchiori of Walsh Construction Company, and Tej Singh of Gilbane Federal.

This was a forum again with experts and industry advisors on exploring ways to continue to achieve construction excellence in projects overseas.

And that concludes our readout. It's been a very busy couple of years, and I thank you for the opportunity to summarize this for our group.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank so much, Sheila.

I just want to ask anybody else who participated in any of these reviews if there are any observations that you'd like to share. Again, these can be not specific to the project, but they can be at a higher level, what this sort of may have taught you

about the State Department's program, anything that you may have walked away with thinking this is something that State should focus on. Any ideas, impressions would be much appreciated.

MS. BEHA: I just wanted to say how much I appreciated the participation of State Department personnel at these forums or these meetings. It's the program and the advocacy for the program and the lives of the people in the building that are best represented by the State Department personnel.

So the exchange, I felt, was surprisingly, you know, open and helpful. And I think that the architects who were doing the project left with a renewed sense of energy about the program and their possibilities for the building. So it was just a fantastic, fantastic exchange really.

MS. MUNIZ: I think on our side, I had mentioned before that a lot of our staff have sort of come back and said I participated in an IAG and I

think it's been a tremendous learning experience for them as well to have people come from outside the organization with a fresh pair of eyes, with a different perspective.

So we're really grateful for that interaction. I think it's great for both sides. Thank you.

MR. BETSKY: I would just add that I think the crux of the matter is that, as we all know, these embassies, consulates, and other facilities are incredibly impacted by concerns mainly of security nature, but also budget and many other issues.

And the genius of this program is to give the architects a chance to create what are actually good environments and responsible buildings that work well with their environments. And so it becomes very, very complex,

But I think that the real core focus of much of the work, at least that I've seen and that you've

also seen these images, has been how to get actually good stuff, good buildings, good spaces, good environments out of something that otherwise seems to be preset by all these considerations.

So my hats off also to OBO and to everyone who's been working on that.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you.

No. I think it's an interesting shift of mind set because by bringing great designers, great engineers, great constructors to the table, people begin to understand or accept that security and great design doesn't need to be mutually exclusive.

I think there was, as you say, this very sort of set approach, it had to be done this way. But as we begin to deconstruct all of the requirements and redesign in a way that's innovative and in a way that speaks to the environment in which we build these facilities, it speaks to the needs of the people who work in them.

It's very exciting from my perspective to see this. I believe deeply in engineering, in architecture, and I think there's nothing better for these industry professionals than a great challenge.

So I think it's exciting and I feel fortunate to be here at the beginning of this chapter in the State Department's building history. So thank you.

MR. SCARPA: I think what has worked really, really well is the integration of cross disciplines in the reviews like structural, MEP. You know, we always think landscape architecture, you know, are the key reviews, but integrating some of the more technical issues, I think, is really beneficial.

And a lot of times, architects can't see all those little details that could have been in effect in the design phase. And so I think it's really helpful to have that kind of peer review even though most of the times, the architects are not quite ready for it.

But it really gives a sense of things to look out for that could really be, you know, game changers like big exhaust vents in public areas, that you don't want the noise and other things. So I think that worked really well.

MS. MUNIZ: That's a great point.

I want to ask, did we have enough construction folks or constructability reviews in this because I do know -- again, this has come up in some of our design reviews where our construction folks come in and say, you know, great, love it, but have you thought about the labor environment?

So you're awarding this project in, you know, name the place. Labor not terribly skilled. The quality of the concrete you're going to get is not what you might be expecting, and having the conversation about how it's going to be -- how the building is actually going to be put together in some of these far flung places.

For those of you who participated in these reviews, is there a sense that we need to strengthen that part of the participation or was there a good sort of constructability participation in most of the reviews?

Sheila, did you have a sense? I mean, you were in a couple of --

MS. KENNEDY: I was just -- I'm just thinking out loud that I think that we will need more because just following on Ann and Aaron's points and also what Rich referred to, as the preset embassy building type begins to evolve and change, it's just a -- it follows that the construction methods will also need to change.

And that will definitely trigger constructability reviews to ensure that there's the proper participation of local labor, if that's part of the mission, to ensure that everything is to spec. So there's no doubt that this type of review, I think, is

going to be forthcoming.

MS. MUNIZ: Focus on that in the coming year, make sure we have that level of participation. So clear your schedule, Rich.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Thank you.

This may be a non sequitur and stop me if it's not relevant. But I'm thinking of the enormous number of old American embassy buildings around the world, Rome comes to mind, and the fact that over the last 15 years, security has become a much greater concern than it was in the past.

And the fact that the design of the security apparatus tends to be very rough and ready and very off-putting, if I may say so, and I wonder if there's a program or if there's some thinking going on about how there can be some thought given to this problem around the world because it is very, very common.

And the vast majority of our presence around the world has these gerrymandered arrangements

attached to them and far from being welcoming and open and high quality and something that we would be proud to be associated with.

I'm just not sure with all the new building that there is an awareness of this. I'm sure there is, but that it really is a major statement when it's been there for more than 10 or 15 years.

And the experience in Rome, of course, I know intimately. And you used to go in the front door and it was a lovely experience. And everybody went in the front door and it was a very -- there was something to that. So I'm sure you see what I'm talking about.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you for making that comment.

I am guilty of -- I was always sort of correct this leaning that we have to talking about new buildings. A lot of the work that we have obviously are new buildings. We have -- we started with a

billion a year for these new buildings. Our appropriation has been increased to two billion a year. Significant.

But we've also achieved a long-fought battle for funding and significant, still modest compared to the new building for the major rehabilitation of our existing facilities.

And I think the point that you bring up is a wonderful point. I think it is quite true that the solutions to security were not always -- there are a hundred different ways to solve the security problem.

And often folks would go out and just put the known solution and walk away. But I think that we are trying to take a much more innovative approach to solving these problems because you're quite right, our inventory is predominantly older buildings --

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Which is great.

MS. MUNIZ: -- and that have talked to generations of folks in these capitol cities and

suddenly, the message is a very different one, as you said, from walking in the front door.

My experience as a child was the U.S. embassy in Paris and how that has evolved over time. But I think it's a great point and I think that that's something that we need to begin to look at. There's not a one size fits all solution.

MS. MUNIZ: Yes. But I think -- I want to think about this because we must push to do these projects quickly --

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Uh-huh.

MS. MUNIZ: -- and to be careful with the resources that we're using for the program.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Well --

MS. MUNIZ: I think what we could do is link together the list of all the security upgrades that must be done and have a quick IAG review with professionals who are going to look at solving the problem innovatively. I think by linking things

together, we'll get further.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: It's completely understandable if you have to do an intervention that's sort of rough and ready to begin with, but to maybe think about it and pick and choose perhaps.

MR. BETSKY: I would add that it would be wonderful if there would be some way -- I mean, I think the State Department has come so far in terms of design excellence in the last few years.

It would be wonderful if there was a way to get some of that thinking earlier on the process so we could avoid things like -- possibly avoid things like my experience growing up which was the beautiful Breuer Embassy in the Hague which has now just been abandoned for a suburban location.

And I know, again, the security question is of the utmost importance, but I'd love to see -- I've seen what good design thinking can do with new construction. It would be fantastic to see if some

design thinking could be applied to the actual decisions about whether such older buildings in downtown locations can be adapted or reused.

MS. MUNIZ: I think that's a great point.

I'm going to turn to either Patrick McNamara, or Jason Dallara who happens to be right there. Jason or Pat McNamara, this is our real estate group and they -- Jason recently has gone to our site acquisitions, but he was in charge of a planning group that does just that, right, that has done a rigorous analysis of whether we can stay in place.

And Ann Beha who was awarded the design for Athens because I think that's a great example of that kind of a study. I don't know if the decision would have been made absent the study that showed that this was really an important place to stay, but also better for U.S. taxpayer, better for the mission.

So Jason or Pat. I don't know who --

MR. MCNAMARA: Yeah, maybe I'll say

something. Jason can jump in.

You're actually right. I mean, clearly if -
- you know, a lot of our embassies, legacy embassies
are located at Main and Main. And if we could stay
there, that's clearly our preference. They're
beautiful old buildings, as you say, terrific
locations.

The challenge, as you pointed out, is that
they don't meet current security standards. You know,
the building in the Hague, it's basically on the
sidewalk.

You know, we -- as part of our process when
we're looking to plan and build a new embassy or
consulate, we go through a fairly rigorous process.
We call it, you know, a stay in place or redevelopment
option.

We look very carefully is there some way
that we can make this existing building at this
location work. We look at whether we could buy up

property adjacent to the current building, increase the setback by putting bollards, that sort of thing in the street.

And we've been successful in a few locations, but it's -- they are few and far between. It's very, very difficult to make these locations work because primarily of security.

One of the new embassy projects that we saw a slide on was Jakarta. That's a site that we -- that we're on now and we're going to stay. We were able to make it work because it's a relatively large property to begin with and we were able to acquire some additional real estate so that we could remain there. And that's a location that's -- it's like being on the National Mall in Washington. It's just a terrific area to be.

But as I said, it is challenge, but it's a process we go through with every new embassy and consulate to see if we can make it work.

Jason, did you want to jump in?

MR. DALLARA: I'm not sure I have too much to add to what Lydia and Patrick have said. I mean, I guess there are a couple different things.

One is redeveloping the site to try to keep a great location that we have. Patrick described Main and Main, and I was going to jump in with Jakarta which is a great example of how we were able to assemble some tracks around a location. It's just spectacular. I mean, the National Mall is the right comparison.

We've also recently, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, bought an adjacent property to our existing site and were able to preserve another location that we've been in for decades. We're not going to be able to preserve that building, but we're able to preserve a great, you know, representational, potentially symbolic location in Colombo.

So we are with every new acquisition, with

every new facility moving forward, we're certainly looking at trying to redevelop the property in any way if we can't keep the building. Maybe the question was almost more about the buildings as well, but we're also looking at that.

We started doing it a couple years ago. Athens, I think, was one of the first ones that we looked at. We have the historic Gropius Building there. So we went through a multi-year effort with our diplomatic security folks to say is there any way that we can preserve this building, and also a great site, by the way, preserve this building for the next 50 years. And the answer was yes. And in Athens, it was a combination of old and new, if you will, so very interesting.

We were -- actually, another assemblage story, to be quite honest. But many, many years back, we were able to buy a piece of property behind an existing facility and expand the size of our site to

what it is now, probably about seven acres. That actually enabled us to go down the path we're going down now which is combining old plus new.

But we've also done similar analysis in Paris, looking forward to other places like Tokyo, places where we have old historic buildings, and working with our diplomatic security colleagues to see if there is a possible solution to keep these great old buildings that we have.

MS. MUNIZ: I'd also like to add -- Aaron, I don't know if this is -- you may be aware of this, but we're also changing the set design of our embassies and consulates, we are pushing much harder to go back to the center of the city, right?

So I think there was an effort at some point back, just get a ten acre site. If it's not by the equivalent of Dulles Airport, don't worry too much about that. We're worrying a lot about that.

We've also heard from our colleagues, the

diplomats who work in these posts, about the importance of being close to their colleagues. We know how important that is in performing the work.

So if we can't stay in place, I think London is a great example, we're much, much more aware of where we need to be and really working hard to be in the right places if we're put in the position of having to build a new facility.

MR. TOUSSAINT: Yeah. I'd just like to add to this conversation. We were reminded the other day that there are two congressionally mandated challenges we have to deal with, one of them being collocation.

So when we touch a project and we go through a major capital construction project, one of the goals is to collocate all of the people under chief admission authority on to one site for security and the other is setback, a hundred foot setback.

So those are the two challenges that the department has to deal with under the circumstances

and sometimes it becomes, like in Athens, it's a program that's quite large that we have to accommodate there. So those are factors that we have to consider in all of these studies.

MR. BETSKY: I don't want to drag this out, but I just wanted to -- the only point I was trying to make is that I would love to see you at the beginning of discussion asking an architect because the funny thing about architects and designers is sometimes they see things with different eyes.

And I would love to see architects provide their expertise at that stage.

MR. GALEN: Yeah. I think my comments or a related comment that may be coming out in the opposite direction, the program reviews that I was a part of were a very sophisticated nuance to exchange of ideas between public and private sector on really challenging issues related to full life cycle of the asset, whether it was post occupancy review that was

looking at operability, sustainability, maintainability including security or the asset management review.

And I think that the opportunity is to be sure that you bring together both the design and construction phase focus on the one hand and the full life cycle phase focus on the other and to the extent that design reviews and program reviews can cross.

And so I think it's really consistent with the last several comments to be sure that you've both got the near term and the long term, the design and the sustainability, operability focus together in the early phases of a project, just not in the later phases.

MS. MUNIZ: Thanks so much. Very helpful.

Anybody want to add on this side? I don't want to take too much time from Tod and Billie because it's a great, exciting presentation, but any closing comments on this side before I turn it over?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

MS. MUNIZ: So without holding this up further, thank you very much for your observations. And we'll have more time for more conversation later on and in the coming year.

But I wanted to move to an introduction that I'm very pleased to make. They really don't need an introduction. But, anyway, Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, who are doing our Mexico City embassy project in a joint venture with Davis Brody Bond.

This is a design that I've had the privilege of sitting in a number of reviews, early reviews, and it's really been a wonderful journey to see the evolution of the design and to see -- what I love is the relationship between the architects and the State Department.

So I think new architects come on and when they don't know us, they look at us and think, well, how are we going to work this out. So there's this

part of the relationship where we're standing at a distance and then you get to a part of the relationship where it's working together and moving together. And that's a really exciting thing to see.

And I think you guys are absolutely there. So, anyway, welcome and look forward to the presentation, Tod and Billie.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Lydia.

It's been great. This has been a really interesting project. It has taken us on an adventure we didn't expect and directions we really didn't expect working with Davis Brody Bond, Space Smith, and Michael Van Valkenburgh, but many other great consultants and, of course, the OBO, all of our team. Thanks.

MS. TSIEN: We're just going to start out by talking a little bit about the site to introduce you to the site. So Mexico City, it's been -- we feel so lucky. It's such an incredibly rich environment and

it's also very good for your aerobic health.

MR. WILLIAMS: But this diagram indicates that Mexico City is really at the same exact level as Mumbai and Hong Kong, both places where we had worked, but it's very different, of course, than the place we are right now.

It's, as you might be able to read, it's at elevation 7,500 feet which is extraordinary, the seventh highest large city in the planet -- on the planet and the 54th highest city, period, of a hundred thousand people or more.

What is amazing is its spread and that it's an astonishingly green city with, as you can see, spots of color throughout. A lot of smog is a problem, but you're close to the sun. You have many sunny days and you also have many days where it rains actually in the morning and the evening.

MS. TSIEN: So this image shows the existing embassy which is in the center, the Zocalo which is

the sort of historic center and the new embassy site which is off to the side.

That site is actually occurring in a developing and quite interesting neighborhood. It's called Nuevo Polanco. It's next to the Polanco area of Mexico City.

MR. WILLIAMS: And so I think the new choice of site is an interesting one, a very, very good one. The old site was terrific. It simply could not expand in that location. It's a valuable site.

This new one, as been mentioned, is a former Colgate Palmolive factory and this whole area was a factory area, but it's rapidly changing. There's the new Soumayan Museum very, very close by and the Chipperfield Museum has just come up.

The embassy site that we see here outlined in two red lines is the 15 acre site that was purchased by the State Department and it was determined that we would use about half of that area

for the embassy as we build.

And our first assignment really was to look at what eight acres we would choose. The site is -- this hardly indicates the way it is. There are actually very -- on the lower image you see, they're actually intimate and small scale dwellings, not always the most expensive, but this is an area which is directly to the south of the site and probably will remain so for some long time.

However, to the east that we're looking at over here is this new development by Carlos Slim and a place where tall towers, 30 story towers are popping up everywhere. So it is a changing area, a very valuable area.

MS. TSIEN: Well, even since this image was taken, a number of other towers have come up. So it's really developing very, very quickly into a quite wealthy residential area.

MR. WILLIAMS: That also happens with

embassies, I guess because they're safe and secure. Property values go way, way up when embassies are built.

This really indicates very early analysis of it. We decided that the public accesses will be by this roundabout that -- at the west edge of the site and the north edge of the site. There are many other factors.

And the eight acres were looked at in a variety of different ways. Later on, we also explored three different building types to look at. This just indicates site one, two, and three. We ultimately chose option three which is the eight acre site that gives us, we think, the very best frontage.

Embassies do seem to want to have access all around the compound for security and for access and we will do that.

Just talking about factors, this is Mexico City and this is -- these are images of Chapultepec.

It's an amazingly green city and it's interesting that it has an upper sort of light story of green and then a lower level of green.

It's not -- there's a very good sense of being able to look long distances at eye level which is actually interesting and also provides both the shade and comfort of the green, but also provides a good deal of security.

MS. TSIEN: So this is a starting point really for Michael Van Valkenburgh's thinking. And from the very beginning, we wanted to keep the complex as low as possible and as green as possible. So as these tall buildings start to surround that area, this would remain a kind of oasis.

MR. WILLIAMS: And so what you see is a massing of the building but with many courtyards. We thought -- certainly thought the public landscape really -- this area in red is where the public really comes to the building. And there is an important

green area that's comfortable under trees where the public enters actually three secure parts of the building.

Those Americans coming for any problems they might have or a renewed Visa, Mexicans who are coming for their first time, maybe 2,000 people a day, and then there's the Franklin Library which is a resource center for citizens in Mexico, both Americans and Mexicans alike.

All of them will enter through this central front porch which we've depicted in the model as being actually a space that's rather generous in height. I would say the top of this building is 45 feet. So this is a very, very generous porch that one enters.

And the serpentine walls will be -- are both a way to provide a secure area, walls that are low enough that you can see over, but vehicles cannot penetrate, and provide a variety of sitting areas for the public outside and inside.

MS. TSIEN: So our building is really focused around the courtyard and there are exterior courtyards and then the interior courtyard. We thought a lot about the people who will be working there every day. So the -- there will be more than 2,000 people working every day and more than 2,000 people visiting every day.

So we're trying to make outdoor courtyards and interior courtyards and certainly this is a city that is based on courtyards. And even the existing embassy has a small but well-used courtyard.

MR. WILLIAMS: So we're really looking at courtyards and patio topologies that we find in Mexico City. The covered area there is useful for the sun which is high and bright, direct coming down, and then -- so there are verandas.

This is even the Zocalo which is a kind of an amazing courtyard. It actually only has -- its problem is there not being as much shade as you might

like. But you can see the courtyards are everywhere. It's part of the culture, the national palace right next to the Zocalo, for example.

And then the great anthropological museum in Chapultepec Park has been a touchstone for us. And it has a huge canopy and the canopy is very valuable there because -- not only because of the strength of the sun but also the issue of rain.

And our embassy then has in its heart not a critical interior space but a critical place to break out the courtyard of significant size which is in -- outlined in red.

And a cross section, short cross section through that indicates that it's basically a five story building above grade and three below, a total basically of seven stories.

We enter at grade and then ascend to a kind of piano nobile. The main courtyard level is one level above grade and that enables people within the

embassy to move vertically up and/or down, largely, if possible, by their stairs and adjoining courtyards.

MS. TSIEN: So this is very much about reducing the scale and the site overall. And then you can see that there are courtyards within the major courtyard and to either side. So that's about bringing light down to those lower spaces, working spaces.

MR. WILLIAMS: A rather faded courtyard plan to scale. Sorry. Just indicates, and we'll zoom in, that first level above grade, the population that might be -- this is where our cafeteria is and where people can sit both inside and out so that we can imagine it could comfortably on any day, nearly 220 seats outside, certainly in case of a banquet.

And we also looked at this same plan as if there were other venues in operation. A lecture here shows 300 seats basically, listening to someone talk or a presentation even as people might be also

casually dining.

And then on occasion, maybe on the 4th of July, there's -- there are events where as many as a thousand people might be in the courtyard. So it's a courtyard that really can take probably a great many people in a secure environment.

The long cross section through that is a canopy that has several -- two very large apertures to the sky to allow the rain to come down and to wash the gardens, but enough coverage to make sure there's shade and shadow and people are protected from the brief but often strong downpours that occur at the beginning and end of the day.

MS. TSIEN: So the larger openings are actually open to the sky and the smaller openings will be -- have a covering, a clear covering. So the -- and that means the large openings, as Tod says, are occurring over those planted spaces, particularly the much -- the secondary lower courtyard.

MR. WILLIAMS: And here you can see -- go back -- well, here we can see on the left the area where the -- often called the catch (phonetic) where the public enters the building through this generous canopy and also, again, through courtyards.

The next image is actually one -- Nat Oppenheimer was our structural engineer for this canopy at Prospect Park and it is, in fact, the size of our courtyard, so it's a really very, very generous space that we're going to be covering in Mexico City.

MS. TSIEN: Like the height will be much higher.

MR. WILLIAMS: And then we're exploring different structures for the canopy. This is rather more advanced than these images right now. We're doing it through models. But we had an instinct that the canopy as a partially covered canopy was a good one, but we needed to test it and make sure that it actually would work, other variants on that.

The top of this will be covered with solar panels as -- where it is not covered, does not have these apertures. So we looked at the idea of issues that could occur up there, be solar collection. There's rainwater collection and there's basically the passive cooling that would occur and conditioning that occurs by the canopy.

And then we ran models of our canopies and determined that, in fact, this will give slight vortexes, gentle vortexes of air movement and very, very few hot spots that actually then don't migrate around the space. So there's all -- there will always be places of warmth.

It's difficult to read these, but it really confirmed that this should be a very good system by which we can give comfort to that interior space or exterior space.

We also looked at courtyards that are below grade. We've had some experience with these and

trying to bring light down to lower regions of the building because we believe that the main campus, the main level of all cities is ground level, and we wanted to animate the spaces that are directly below those a couple of levels and the few above to make sure -- instead of using elevators, we use our senses to move up and down through the building.

So we have a number of courtyards below grade and they're shown here.

MS. TSIEN: So this is at the lowest level and people at this level can walk directly out into the courtyards.

MR. WILLIAMS: So not only -- and at these lowers, you have large, especially on the interior of the building, large cascading glass areas that enable you to look anywhere where you're sitting to a garden.

We actually -- the -- a much smaller version of this actually, smaller than any garden we've done at the embassy. There's one here in Philadelphia, the

Barnes Foundation, which is 20 feet below grade, but is essentially an 80 foot tall or 60 -- pardon me -- 60 foot tall shoot of enclosure. But it still provides a delightful environment for those who are at lower levels.

A garden into which one can walk, in this case, libraries and books. People are delighted to be down below grade and we're trying to make sure that we have this level of quality at the lower level of the embassy.

Beauty through solidity was an idea that we had, but it's also an idea that is critical for embassy design, period, and that also happens to be an idea that resides there in Mexico City and the many cultures in the world, solidity precedence we --

MS. TSIEN: So this is the UNAM Building, university building, so that sense of weight, I think is very important in Mexican culture and in buildings, something that we also think about in our own work.

MR. WILLIAMS: As more recent examples or newly contemporary example of Luis Barragan's own work. As even more contemporary examples, this is a gist by some very young architects out of Merrydell (phonetic), reusing Yucatecan stone.

And what we see with this stone here is that it's a warm stone. Our surfaces, buildings can't be as --

MS. TSIEN: Textured.

MR. WILLIAMS: -- textured as this, but they certainly can be visually textured. And our own Barnes Foundation is an example of what appears to be an extremely solid building which is both solid and secure, but welcoming and full of light and also has an animated stone surface.

MS. TSIEN: We're also studying screens that will sit in front of the existing building because there are a huge number of windows, but the windows in order to save money are very, very consistent because

the windows themselves are very expensive because they're security windows.

So we're trying to understand how we can protect the people inside from glare, but also give them a lot of light and connection to the outdoors.

MR. WILLIAMS: So crude early sketches of how sun screens would work and sun screens now sit five feet away from the building and are four feet deep. They first were studied in concrete and now are being studied in metal.

MS. TSIEN: So one of the things we're trying to do is make the base building itself fairly straightforward and simple and then try to think about the sun screen, and these are early sketches, as a more decorative element. So that really becomes the face of the building.

MR. WILLIAMS: Craft, a country specific approach to materials. We believe that all countries have something to contribute and we've always been

interested in that in our work. And I think there's a great way to both honor the local culture.

Here working in India, we used the China tile techniques for cladding both the roofs of the buildings. There's a continuous membrane. This is a high tech industry building, but that additional white layer adds to protect and reflect the sun. But we've also then wrapped that down to the surface of the inside of the canopy in India.

Use of local stone, and in India, we went and found -- the Kashmir White, in fact, is not mined in Kashmir, but in Madurai which is in the south of India, and then went to the quarry to understand how it was quarried. So we're able to use large sections of stone at rather low cost.

Hand carved Jalis that come from the northwest of India is something that we found was both affordable and possible in India, first being done by hand and finished today by hand. They're also now

using C and C cutters to extend patterns.

MS. TSIEN: So we're trying to understand there how to use traditional craft and perhaps reinterpret it in a new way. This is an elevated walkway that connects buildings in India and is there for -- during monsoon and also to move quickly between buildings. And it's using those Jalis that were carved by stone.

This is using the ability of women who weaving is a very important craft in India that still exists, so wall weavings that are based on a kind of traditional Ikat pattern.

MR. WILLIAMS: Here we are actually in Mexico beginning to visit stone yards. This particular yard had over 3,000 different kinds of stone, but we were interested primarily in their local stone which interestingly enough they don't advertise.

But you go there and you begin to find out that it's the least expensive stone and in many ways

the best stone. Actually, stone exists there, as you may know, and it's been there for a while. In this case, volcanic stone and this stone Michael will use to clad those serpentine walls at the entrance.

But this is a local stone that we found that is -- can be easily hand chiseled, a wonderful marble called --

MS. TSIEN: Santo Tomas.

MR. WILLIAMS: -- Santo Tomas and actually has been used for hundreds of years.

MS. TSIEN: It's quite varied in its coloration.

MR. WILLIAMS: We looked at the work of Mathias Goeritz who worked with Barragan who is a German -- actually Austrian born artist. And he was the one that brought color to Barragan and realized that there were very simple, crude metal crafts that were available there. And we hope to extend the use of that kind of thinking.

MS. TSIEN: Perhaps in the sun screen.

MR. WILLIAMS: Hammered metal here in this image and then incredible weaving opportunities that occur in Mexico City and in Mexico itself. There's a way by which you can honor the culture and the great craft abilities that are there.

MS. TSIEN: So in the very rough sketch you saw of the screen, there's a kind of decorative element along one end. And so we're thinking also about those borders, so there's fabric that is fairly simple and then there are borders that are fairly complex. And you can see it here. So we're thinking about can we take this idea of borders.

MR. WILLIAMS: Or in this case, the weaving that comes from the Yucca plant, the many mats, hemp weaving, natural weaving that exists and the patterns that are available.

Finally, the paper -- well, you just jumped over that. We found this wonderful cement tile

operation that they do and so, so very well there. And we have videos of that and found that they can make these amazing tiles at low cost in any possible pattern and color.

MS. TSIEN: So we're still in the midst of - - we just finished our design development documents which were a lot thanks to the help of our team and our many, many consultants. And we're on towards the next step to finish up our construction drawings. And it's been so far a great journey and we thank OBO.

MR. WILLIAMS: We want to make sure that you all recognize these are buildings for people who are in Mexico. They are the Mexicans. Two thousand people come there every day.

In our particular embassy, there are 2,000 that may be working there, a thousand of which are Americans and another thousand that are Mexicans. The Americans move through every two years and the Mexicans are there.

Each person wants to feel a sense of belonging and we want our buildings to feel like they belong both to our culture and to their culture and to the great gift we have of sort of bridges to different countries using the great OBO resources.

So thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. MUNIZ: Tod, Billie, thank you so much for sharing that with the group. Really, really exciting project.

I'd like to open the floor for questions. Many of you are seeing this just for the first time and you have access to Tod and to Billie, so fire away at our IAG members or anybody in the larger group.

Any questions? There's got to be one question.

MR. BIERUT: I have a question.

The way you brought in local craft traditions as you showed in those final examples is

really inspiring.

What advice do you have to other designers who would take the same tact about avoiding cliché or accusations of cultural appropriation because it seems there could be a fine line between those things?

MS. TSIEN: Well, it's so -- it varies so much from country to country. And Mexico's tradition is very rich. And I think that one of the things that we're doing -- I really believe in peripheral vision as a way of inspiring work and so to in a way have a kind of glance at what's -- at what is available.

And then I think we can go back and try to think about our own work without really focusing on, you know, specific, let's say patterns of weaving or specific kinds of craft and think about how that can come into really what has to be, particularly on the exterior, very robust.

MR. WILLIAMS: I think there are two things, Michael. Another thing is that we like to go to the

anthropological museum in every single country we visit. They tell you so much about what's been there, essentially the common material.

And then we go to the cheapest, crappiest craft stores and look at what's inexpensive. We're attracted to that kind of stuff. And I won't say don't go into the fancy hotels. Go into the poorest places and to the places where history did exist and does exist.

And we saw it recently in Ethiopia, most amazing kinds of things that are possible. I'm sure this is true anywhere. We need to get out of the preconceptions that we've had and then imagine what could happen.

MS. MUNIZ: Any other -- Adele.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Speaking of security, I think -- this is just to compliment you on the courtyards that are subterranean. I mean, it's such a brilliant way to make that not like a bunker, but

instead like the rest of the building in terms of its liveliness and light and air and green and so on.

It works wonderfully at the Barnes. I think it's a brilliant thing to do that can probably be adapted on many of your sites. It's great.

MS. MUNIZ: Let's take a comment from --

MR. RUMER: Good afternoon. Roger Rumer from Bayer MaterialScience.

We've been investing in innovation for physical security. I'm curious whether you have a vision about how to work with architects and engineers and industry about reevaluating standards and also working with Congress who has mandated those standards.

MS. MUNIZ: I think my starting point -- I pause before I answer this and the wheels are turning a little bit. I think I would say this. I think that I've made a conscious decision, we've made a conscious decision that we're not calling into question the

security standards, right?

There's a bureau in the State Department, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. It's their job to set those standards and they have hard jobs. These are people who oftentimes are the first to go to these bombings, the first to walk into these buildings.

Joe who is with OBO, I think -- I always remember something he said to me. We were talking about some of the security features and the security of buildings and these programs.

And, Joe, I think you were talking to me about being in the building after the bombing in Nairobi and seeing hand prints, bloody hand prints all over the building, right?

So I say this not for drama. I say this because the security standards are very real and are left in place. The goal of this program, is taking security performance criteria and solving the problems with innovation and new technologies.

And I think our colleagues at diplomatic security are very interested in doing that. So I'd say we talk at length about standards, about performance measures. And as I mentioned, this is something that I'd like to engage the IAG on.

In the coming year, we'd really like to come up with a security R&D agenda that looks at using new materials and engineering of our building. We don't want to have one size fits all solution, and we do want to be able to open the door to explore different materials and different solutions.

This is an exciting part of our work. This is -- the solving the problem -- what I believe our profession does best and what I find very exciting. And what I find incredibly satisfying -- I'm looking over at the gentleman sitting right next to you, Jaime Salcedo, who is in charge of our programs in Moscow and China, some of our most important and most secure embassies and beautiful.

Two most recent projects Guangzhou and Beijing were done by SOM, Craig Hartman, the partner. And I think Jaime and those buildings showed us, showed the world, and comforted diplomatic security that you could build in the most secure environment and you could still build great buildings and solve the problem differently.

I hope that answers your question in part.

MR. RUMER: Thank you.

MS. MUNIZ: You're welcome, quite welcome.

Any other questions? Yes.

MR. JONES: I actually have one question for you. I think one of the great things about the design of the Mexico City embassy is that we've learned a lot of lessons from the projects that we've done like London and so forth, but you've also helped us push the envelope in terms of approaching design differently, potentially approaching other aspects of how we structure the work.

I'm wondering if you have any concerns as the project goes into construction about our construction process and the constructability. I'm also curious. I don't think you've been yet, but I would suggest possibility visiting a construction site and seeing one of the projects underway. I just wondered if you had any thoughts about that.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, no, we don't know enough, Casey. And I think we should visit sites under construction. We have been permitted to continue through and execute the construction documents. That's very important. And now we're working with Jacobs to help us to go through that process and to make sure that we are being tested in a variety of different ways.

Our design effort isn't done yet, so it's still pretty fluid and I like to keep it as fluid as possible right through to the end to make sure we can make sensible adjustments for cost and for security

and for sensibility.

So I don't have that. I do think that the -
- you may know that there were -- I think there were
contractors who were proposed to us for the embassy.
And in the end at a very early date, and although we
love early involvement, we just want to make sure that
they're terrific contractors who will help us to build
the buildings sensibly in the particular location and
the requirements that OBO and the State Department
have.

So I'd say that we still have a huge
learning curve to undertake, but what I'm excited
about is you're asking us to stay with you.

MS. TSIEN: Well, one of the things I think
is really important for the group here is to the
encouragement of the OBO to have very good contractors
participate. That's not to say that the ones in the
past were not, but what we saw is that most of the
contractors in the past were -- the experience they

had seemed to be primarily of a very kind of heavy industrial nature or either -- it was either prisons or refineries.

And somehow that -- I think it can be broader so that the contractors that are looking at the work will be more familiar with the kind of work that we hope to get from this project.

MR. BETSKY: I know that -- yeah. I just want to add I -- you know, our meetings have been focused on the early contractor involvement, construction management that we're all used to using in the private sector.

There's been a major focus on federal procurement issues and how we can actually make sure that we have good contractor involvement early on and still achieve the federal procurement requirements.

There are good contractors that have been doing State Department work and I think many people at the State Department have been comfortable and happy

with their involvement.

Now, there's also an interest in attracting new contractors and I think some of these discussions will actually be helpful in attracting new contractors, but more importantly I think those contractors that have good experience, understand the security issues, have delivered successfully in the past just need to be introduced and need to be made comfortable that their involvement is sort of welcome and that, you know, please be more open about how you give your advice and remember that you're here as a team member.

And I think that's going to be critical to get those existing contractors that have done good work feeling comfortable to be part of that process and also invite new contractors in.

MR. BETSKY: I just want to compliment Tod and Billie. You whispered to me that not much had changed, but, in fact, a huge amount has changed in

the design.

And I also want to compliment Casey and Joe and their team because you've done an incredible job in making sure that this is, I think, going to be probably the most beautiful embassy ever built maybe until Thom does his.

But the thing I really wanted to emphasize is the lessons that you have in your slides and I think are worth hammering home, mainly that security can be beautiful, that actually rather than hiding it, you can try to understand its essence and make it into architecture, that you don't have to pander to local forums that are skin deep, that you can actually make something that is contextual by trying to understand the essence of the place.

I remember going to an embassy in an eastern Europe country that shall remain nameless. There they have made a new classical building with lots of windows that had steel behind them so they weren't

really windows.

This is really something completely different. This says you can, in the immortal words of Missy Elliott, you can flip and reverse it. You can make security beautiful. You can make something that's American be American and of the place.

And those slides, I think it might be worth taking your slides where you had those sentences on there and just cutting them out and hammering them home because I think it's an incredible achievement to really see these things as not challenges, not restrictions but as an opportunity to make true beauty.

MS. MUNIZ: Great point.

Any other comments, questions on the presentation or on --

MR. BROWNING: The choice of the courtyards and the landscape was really fortunate. It particularly will support if you can get into post

occupancy where you can look at the cognitive function and you look at stress response, having that many people in the building have a view through those courtyards, and particularly the landscape form that you picked, in the neuroscience, it's called a prospect landscape.

And so that's a landscape that both supports cognitive function, but it also -- for women, it enhances their sense of security and for men, it enhances a sense of opportunity.

So having that view through like that is -- I think will have a really profound effect on the people who are spending great portions of their lives in that building. So well done.

MS. MUNIZ: The differentiation between the women and the men, we'll have to discuss that later. But, anyway --

MR. BROWNING: Yeah. I mean, that's interesting. As you get into the neuroscience on

prospect and refuge research, you'll find that there are --

MS. MUNIZ: Of course you'd call neuroscience into this.

MR. BROWNING: Yeah. It's a good chunk of our work right now. You'll find that there are different gender responses to components of the design. Both are beneficial.

MS. MUNIZ: Any other comments, questions? I'm looking around to see if I haven't caught anybody in the back.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

MS. MUNIZ: I think what we're going to do because we went a little longer earlier and wonderful presentation and a lot of interest in Tod and Billie's design for our Mexico City embassy, we are going to skip over the looking at the year ahead.

We have lunch with the IAG members, so I think we can talk about that over lunch, put together

as sort of the plan moving forward, a rough plan, a rough road map.

But in closing, I'd like to thank again the audience who has come to participate. And I want to remind folks that we're going to have about a half hour after this so that you can come up, talk to the IAG, talk to folks from OBO.

I wanted to thank Sheila again for summarizing what had happened in this last year with the IAG, the reviews. Thank you very much.

Tod and Billie, thank you so much for sharing your design. I know that you like to hold these things tight until they're completely ready, but I think to let people see how this design has come along and -- for me what's wonderful to share about your design is how different it is in many respects than some of the work that we had done before.

So I think you address all the security needs. You address all the functional requirements,

but you solve and you resolve those issues in a way that is graceful and thoughtful and innovative and inspiring and that's really what we want to do. So thank you so much.

The next meeting of the IAG is going to be a year from now, next April, though I understand it's always raining when we have this meeting and I'm always coughing because I always have allergies. So maybe we'll think about a slightly different time in April, perhaps May.

Again, welcome everybody to join us in the delegates lounge which is right behind us. I'll hand it over to Christy who will direct us to our next activities. And I know the IAG will be in closed meetings this afternoon.

Thanks again for your participation in our program and for helping us do what we do, but better, doing it better every year and every time we design an embassy, redesign an embassy. Thanks.

MS. FOUSHEE: So as Lydia mentioned, we have a networking session planned for just outside the room here in the delegates lounge.

But in order to ensure that it doesn't happen here at the table and it happens out there, I'm going to ask you guys at the table to go ahead and move out to the delegates lounge.

So if everyone else would just be patient for a second while we let them get out.

(Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)