

**Ambassador U.S. Embassy The Hague  
Roland Arnall**

**Remarks at the Ceremony to Deposit the United States' Ratification  
of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-  
Operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption**

**Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands  
The Hague, The Netherlands**

**December 12, 2007  
10:30 a.m.**

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Thank you for being present today to witness this important occasion, which is the culmination of many years of hard work by many people. As United States Ambassador, I am very proud to see our country joining the Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption.

At the outset, I would like to express the United States' appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in particular the Head of the Treaty Office, Mr. Gerard Limburg, for the professional assistance provided by him and his staff in connection with this ceremony.

I am so pleased that Assistant Secretary Maura Harty has traveled to The Hague to perform this important act. Assistant Secretary Harty has managed the Department of

State's Consular Affairs Bureau since 2002 – demonstrating great competence and professionalism during one of the most challenging periods for our Government and the State Department. She has always had a special place in her heart for the worlds' children. I can only imagine that this must be a very special day for her as Assistant Secretary Harty has led the State Department's efforts over these past years.

It is also an honor to have present Secretary General Hans van Loon, who has adeptly managed the work of the Hague Conference on Private International Law for over 10 years.

I would like now to invite Assistant Secretary Harty to take the floor. Her remarks will be followed by those of Secretary General Van Loon. Please join me in welcoming Ms. Harty to The Hague.