

BUILDING THE DIPLOMACY CENTER

update

November 2015

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Secretary of State John Kerry with German President Joachim Gauck at the U.S. Diplomacy Center construction site

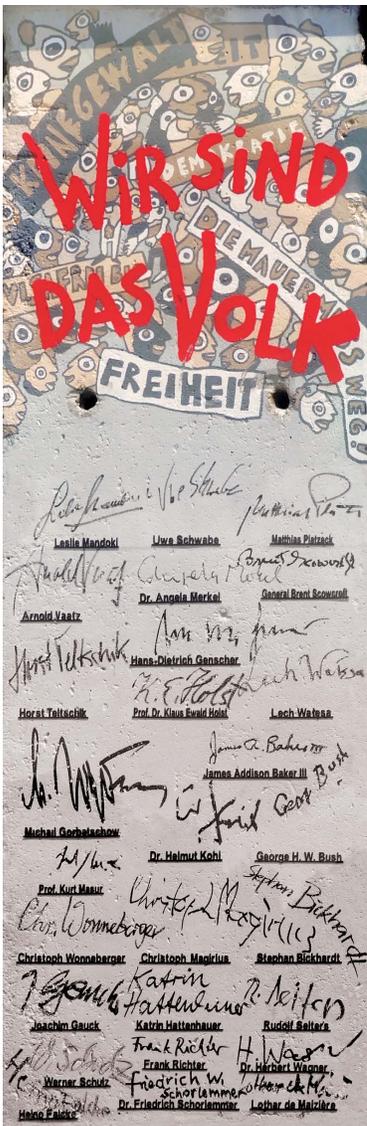
BERLIN WALL SIGNATURE SEGMENT COMES TO THE U.S. DIPLOMACY CENTER

On October 7, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry formally accepted the *Signature Segment* of the Berlin Wall in a ceremony with German President Joachim Gauck at the Department of State. Before an audience that included former U.S. National Security Advisor General Brent Scowcroft, Diplomacy Center Foundation Chairman William Harrop, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State Ambassador Elizabeth Bagley, Atlantic Council CEO Fred Kempe, and other friends and donors of the U.S. Diplomacy Center, the *Signature Segment* completed its remarkable journey through time and across the Atlantic to its new home at the Diplomacy Center.

At the acceptance ceremony, Secretary Kerry acknowledged the segment as an important symbol of freedom and our enduring relationship with Germany. "In receiving this unique symbol and memorial... we at the same time pay tribute to an indelible partnership between two great countries. And inevitably, we think back to an era when an event like this was literally beyond belief.... This Department is blessed to have a place, the U.S. Diplomacy Center, where we are able to receive and display historical gifts."

President Gauck, one of the signers of the wall, echoed Secretary Kerry's words. "It's wonderful to be here, to look at this massive symbol of suppression, and to see it as something that has been consigned to the past... to be a

- ▶ part of this museum. What I
- ▶ would wish to see is young
- ▶ diplomats standing there,
- ▶ continued on next page



Watch Secretary Kerry and German President Gauck's remarks online

BERLIN WALL... CONT.

gazing at that segment of the wall, feeling encouraged when looking at this segment to believe in what can be achieved if people bid farewell to their feeling of powerlessness and consider themselves responsible citizens.”

Verbundnetz Gas (VNG) of Leipzig, Germany, acquired the *Signature Segment* in 2009. After a two-year tour of Europe, VNG presented it to the Atlantic Council in 2014. It was then sent to the German Embassy in Washington, DC, to mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. On August 13, 2015, the *Signature Segment* arrived and was hoisted into place at the Diplomacy Center.

Museum exhibits, artifacts, and educational programs will allow visitors to explore this period in our diplomatic history and hear stories of the courage of individuals and diplomats who worked tirelessly to bring down the wall.



The *Signature Segment* of the Berlin Wall being lifted into the Diplomacy Center



A rendering of the Berlin Wall segment at the U.S. Diplomacy Center

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

On August 13, 2015, against the backdrop of a beautiful blue sky, the 13-foot tall, 2.7-ton *Signature Segment* rose into the air, lifted by a gigantic crane. Onlookers watched in awe as this magnificent piece of history was maneuvered up and over the steel roof beams and lowered into its new home in Hall IV of the U.S. Diplomacy Center. What a contrast to that day on August 13, 1961, when East German officials laid down the barbed wire that would become the Berlin Wall. Once a forbidding barrier to democracy and a hated symbol of oppression, it is now a testament to the strength of diplomacy and the courage and triumph of freedom-loving people.

The *Signature Segment* has pride of place as the first and largest artifact in the U.S. Diplomacy Center. Accompanying it, contemporary photos, texts, artifacts and interactive tools will explain how, throughout the post-World War II era, American diplomats persevered to end the Cold War and lay the foundation for the strong transatlantic relationship we enjoy today. We hope that by directly experiencing this piece of living history, visitors will gain new insights into how American diplomacy works to safeguard our nation’s security and prosperity.

The U.S. Diplomacy Center is grateful to Verbundnetz Gas (VNG), the Atlantic Council, the German Embassy and the Diplomacy Center Foundation for their roles in the journey of the *Signature Segment* to the Diplomacy Center. We look forward to sharing the powerful story of the Berlin Wall and the diplomatic efforts that contributed to its fall with the museum’s visitors, especially the high school and college students who represent tomorrow’s leaders.

Kathy A. Johnson, Director



Workers move the segment into place in Hall IV

INSIDE OUR COLLECTION - CONSERVATION

THE BERLIN WALL AND EDUCATION

To mark the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Diplomacy Center launched the online exhibit *Voices of U.S. Diplomacy and the Berlin Wall* in 2009.

The exhibit invites viewers to explore the world of diplomacy through the voices of diplomats and discover how they worked behind the scenes in Cold War Germany. Each section of the exhibit includes a rich tapestry of oral histories, images, and artifacts from the Diplomacy Center's collection, as well as historical facts which provide context. The site also incorporates a number of videos about the Berlin Wall, its construction, speeches by U.S. presidents, and its fall.

The exhibit features testimony from key figures during the period. Jonathan Dean, Political Counselor in Bonn, from 1968 to 1972 explains: "How could we work on a long-term basis to undermine the Soviet's hold over the area? It seemed to me that the only way to do that was through a system of deliberate contacts, not only with the general population, but also with the regimes themselves in an attempt to change them over a period of time."



A screenshot from the online Berlin Wall exhibit

The online exhibit has been used widely by teachers and students and featured in a number of Diplomacy Center educator workshops and presentations. Not only does it showcase important artifacts in our collection, it offers an example of how the U.S. Diplomacy Center exhibits can be used by educators.

Visit the [Voices of U.S. Diplomacy and the Berlin Wall](http://diplomacy.state.gov).

The first artifact is now securely in place at the future U.S. Diplomacy Center. The *Signature Segment* of the Berlin Wall stands firmly at the confluence of the dual staircase in the Diplomacy Center's pavilion. In preparation for receiving the segment, a conservator specializing in monuments and architectural elements examined it thoroughly before and after its transport from the German Embassy to the Diplomacy Center. This assessment provides a baseline understanding of the artifact's condition and will be a point of reference for future examinations. Areas of previous damage and alterations were noted in the conservator's report, as well as areas that may need attention in the future.

For logistical reasons, this very large artifact had to be placed in the middle of an open-air construction site. Until the pavilion is finished, the segment will be physically protected within a Plexiglass case. It is surrounded by an enclosure consisting of plywood sheets over a scaffolding frame that includes a hatch door for access and air vents in the sides to allow for air flow. This provides a strong layer of protection while construction continues.



Example from the conservator's report, examining the condition of the wall

The U.S. Diplomacy Center staff is now developing ways to protect the wall as part of the overall exhibition program for the future museum. Considerations include: the type of glass for its display case; the dimensions of the display case; how the case should be engineered (allowing air flow to equalize and reducing dust build-up); how to provide access for future examinations of the wall by a conservator; and how to conduct regular cleaning within the case itself. These are the types of questions to be answered for any artifact going on display – and which are made all the more interesting when considering such a large and significant object.

BUILDING THE DIPLOMACY CENTER

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The Berlin Wall *Signature Segment* is installed and well-protected amidst the ongoing construction of the U.S. Diplomacy Center pavilion. It has been placed in its new home at the base of the dual staircase leading into the lower level.



Berlin Wall seen in the lower level

Construction of the pavilion is 50% complete. The steel structure is in place, the last beam has been signed and set, and the concrete floor poured. Over the next few months, skylights will be placed in the roof and the glass wall installed around the exterior.

On the lower level, expert mechanical, electrical, and plumbing technicians are working from sunrise to sunset to install conduit runs throughout the ceiling spaces and shear walls. Also on the lower level, the cafe, bookstore, restrooms, and elevator areas are in the "rough-in" stage, in preparation for final finishes and fixtures.

Meanwhile, at the Tennessee Marble Company, our general contractor is doing the "dry lay" for the marble floor, i.e., placing the rectangular marble tiles in an aesthetically pleasing pattern.

Next, the dual staircase leading to the lower level will be installed.



"Dry Lay" in Tennessee The Beyer Blinder Belle design will allow museum visitors to see both sides of the Berlin Wall when traversing either side of the staircase.

STAY INFORMED

The *Signature Segment* of the Berlin Wall at the Diplomacy Center caught the attention and appreciation of our social media audience. Check out the photos and videos of the segment's arrival and installation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). On October 8, Director Kathy Johnson was interviewed live on the Kojo Nnamdi Show on WAMU 88.5, the NPR member station in Washington, DC.

Keep up with the latest news from the U.S. Diplomacy Center and enjoy our new series highlighting some of the most interesting and unusual artifacts in our collection.

Below is a sampling of recent social media posts featuring the Diplomacy Center.



ABOUT THE U.S. DIPLOMACY CENTER

The USDC is a privately-funded, non-partisan museum and education center dedicated to bringing the story of American diplomacy to life. Located at the Department of State's historic headquarters, the Harry S Truman Building, the Center will invite visitors to explore the history, practice, and challenges of American of diplomacy through interactive exhibits, artifacts, hands-on education programs, diplomatic simulations, and the expertise of foreign affairs specialists.

Comments or questions? Email us at: usdc@state.gov

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