

**Remarks of Ann M. Veneman, Executive Director, UNICEF  
At the dedication ceremony of the Carol Bellamy Operations Center  
Wednesday, 18 January 2006  
New York, NY**

I would like to wish you a very good evening and thank you all so very much for being here this evening on what is a very, very special occasion for UNICEF.

I am so proud to be a part of this event to recognize Carol Bellamy in such a meaningful and lasting way. UNICEF, as you all know, has a long history of naming its facilities in honor of people who have helped to shape this organization.

Of course, we are standing in one of those, the Danny Kaye Visitors Center. But this is the first time UNICEF has honored a living person in this way.

(Laughter)

The Operations Center at UNICEF dates back a decade. Under the leadership of Carol Bellamy, it was formally established 10 years ago on quite a small scale. In fact, we were hearing some of the history of that as we toured the Center tonight.

Then throughout the remainder of her tenure, she understood the important coordinating, monitoring and response role to be played by "OPSCEN," and she supported its expansion.

In 1999, the conflict in Kosovo led OPSCEN to begin operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – just as it has ever since. Today, OPSCEN plays a key role in tracking activities around the world and supporting UNICEF offices and staff.

It also serves an important liaison role with the entire UN system, providing direct and immediate connections to help ensure we are all working with the same information, and as one UN team.

The Operations Center is a major contributor to UNICEF's humanitarian-response mission.

Whether in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami, an earthquake in Pakistan or Iran, flooding in Central America or conflict situations in a host of countries, the work of UNICEF can mean the difference between life and death for countless children.

Our ability to be prepared for crisis situations is essential not just within Emergency Operations, but to every area of UNICEF, and it

**supports our work on priorities such as the Millennium Development Goals.**

**Carol Bellamy deserves enormous credit for her commitment and foresight in positioning UNICEF as an effective and high-profile leader in global emergency response.**

**That role took on new and unexpected dimensions with just a few months left in her tenure.**

**UNICEF's response to the tsunami and Carol Bellamy's steady and capable leadership during such an enormous disaster saved lives and averted an even bigger crisis.**

**Her tireless work and travel in the field came to symbolize the work and dedication of many other staff members who were racing to prevent needless additional deaths. And they earned UNICEF enormous admiration from around the world.**

**This evening, we recognize the enduring contributions Carol Bellamy and what she has done for UNICEF, and in particular, to our capacity to prepare for and respond to crisis situations.**

**I am very pleased to help honor her and those on the frontlines of UNICEF's Emergency Operations with the naming of the Carol Bellamy Operations Center.**

**(Applause)**

**[...]**

**This plaque is the identical plaque to what has been placed upstairs on the second floor in our brand new Operations Center, newly redesigned.**

**And it says:**

**'Carol Bellamy Operations Center, OPSCEN. Dedicated to Carol Bellamy, UNICEF Executive Director 1995 to 2005. Her vision, inspiration and leadership established the Operations Center to support UNICEF staff and operations worldwide, everywhere and at all times. New York City, 18 January 2006.'**

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