

# THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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## DESIGN FOR U.S. ROOM AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS DESCRIBED BY ARCHITECTS

Forty-six decorative white plastic wall panels against a background of green velvet form an important part of the design for the Executive Board Room at the new Headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization now nearing completion in Paris. At the request of the Department of State, the International Council at the Museum of Modern Art undertook responsibility for planning and decorating the Room, the U.S. contribution to the interior of the new Headquarters, and raising the necessary funds. Work is progressing under the direction of Philip C. Johnson Associates, prominent New York architects, commissioned by the Council for the Project.

The Executive Board Room, in which the governing body of Unesco meets three or four times a year, is located on the second floor of the new Conference Building. When the Board is not in session, the room will be used for Committee meetings. A flexible furniture arrangement has been provided so that the room can easily be converted to a Committee room. The Executive Board Room is one of 8 rooms designed and furnished by member States at the request of Unesco. The U.S. Room measures approximately 45 by 75 feet with a variable ceiling height following the slope of the roof, which measures 14 feet at the entrance and 20 feet at the far wall.

The architects today gave the following description of how the room will be finished:

Ceiling - hard white plaster

Walls - three walls of green velvet which include the entrance and two side walls. The far wall is bush-hammered concrete. Standing out from the velvet-covered walls will be 46 white plastic sculptured wall panels surrounded by enameled steel frames. These will be suspended in a manner similar to Heraldic Emblems from enameled steel poles, and will stand approximately four inches apart. The panels are about three feet wide and seven feet high.

Lighting - a series of 82 suspended lights in concentric ellipses reflect the furniture layout. The lights are constructed with variable steel lengths so that all fixtures are at a set level and in effect negate the slope of the ceiling.

Air-conditioning - the room is supplied by ceiling diffusers with wall returns behind the decorative screens.

Furniture - A conference table in the form of a hollow ellipse made up of nine

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segments, which will seat 35 delegates. An elliptical table for six secretaries is set within the area enclosed by the larger Conference table. Forty-two smaller tables for additional staff members and delegates seat either three or four persons.

A raised portable platform capable of seating 20 people can be used in two positions depending on the function of the room.

A pamphlet rack for storage of printed forms.

All furniture is movable in order to form two distinctly different groupings depending on the nature of the Conference held.

Tables are of ebonized walnut on black anodized aluminum frames with white parchment tops for simultaneous interpretations, and have microphone outlets marble ashtrays and placards.

Chairs designed by Eero Saarinen for Knoll, have black anodized square tube bases with off-white Rugby fabric.

Doors are of ebonized ash.

Translation booths - a series of booths along one side wall of the room are located at an intermediate level above the decorative panels separated from the room by a continuous double wall of plate glass.

The International Council at the Museum of Modern Art consists of art patrons and community leaders from various parts of the country. Mr. August Heckscher is Chairman, Mrs. Bliss Parkinson, President. Funds for the Unesco room were contributed by private sources on the initiative of Mrs. Henry Potter Russell of San Francisco, a member of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco and of the International Council. Foundations and the Council itself also contributed.

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Photographs and additional information will be available in October.  
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