



AS IT IS

Jill Biden Visits Paris to Announce America's Return to UNESCO

July 24, 2023

Jill Biden, the first lady of the United States, is in Paris this week to announce her country's return to UNESCO.

UNESCO is the educational, cultural and scientific organization of the United Nations.

Biden flew overnight and arrived with her daughter, Ashley, early on Monday to be there for Tuesday's ceremony. They will see the American flag raised to mark the U.S. return to UNESCO after five years.

UNESCO is the organization that **designates** World Heritage sites – noting they should be marked for eternal preservation. Eternal means something that lasts forever. The organization also works to create **collaboration** among nations in education, science and culture.

UNESCO recently denounced attacks by Russia on Ukraine that have damaged historical places, such as a church in Odesa. The organization noted Russia had earlier agreed to limit attacks to prevent damage on such places.

The Bidens will return to the U.S. on Wednesday, but they plan to visit the famous Mont-Saint-Michel before they leave. The place is a world heritage site in Normandy, in northern France.

Jill Biden will also meet with Brigitte Macron, the wife of French President Emmanuel Macron.

Spokespeople from the administration of President Joe Biden said rejoining UNESCO was part of the president's goal to strengthen partnerships around the world. The administration also said it shows America's interest in being a U.N. leader.

Others said Jill Biden was the right person to take part in Tuesday's event because of her experience as a teacher and college professor. Elizabeth Alexander is a spokesperson for Biden. She said the first lady is "honored to help celebrate this important **milestone.**"

The U.S. left UNESCO in 2018 during President Donald Trump's time in office. Trump's administration was protesting what it called unfair treatment of Israel by UNESCO.

UNESCO voted earlier in July to approve the United States' **readmission** to the group. As part of rejoining UNESCO, the U.S. will pay more than \$600 million over a number of coming years. That amount includes what the U.S. would have paid had it been a member since 2018. Clubs, labor groups and other organizations call these amounts **dues**.

The U.S. also withdrew from UNESCO in the 1980s during Ronald Reagan's presidency. It rejoined the group in 2003 under President George W. Bush. Bush's wife, Laura, announced the move at a UNESCO meeting that year.

I'm Dan Friedell.

Dan Friedell adapted this story for Learning English from reports by the Associated Press.

Words in This Story

designate -v. to officially chose something

collaboration -n. to work together with another group

milestone -n. an important event in the development of a person or an ongoing activity

readmission -n. to be admitted again

dues -n. (pl.) a regular payment that is made to be a member of an organization

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