

Mercer "Mercede" Reynolds III
born 17 June 1945, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Mercer Reynolds was confirmed by the United States Senate on August 1, 2001 as U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. He was sworn in by Secretary of State Colin Powell on August 14. Ambassador Reynolds presented his credentials to the Swiss Government on September 11, 2001. Ambassador Reynolds was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee on June 17, 1945. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a Masters of Business Administration degree from the University of Tennessee.

After serving in the U.S. Army from 1968 to 1969, Ambassador Reynolds took a position with the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Chattanooga. In 1979, together with his friend and business partner, William DeWitt, he founded Reynolds, DeWitt & Co., an investment firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Ambassador Reynolds was co-chairman of the company from 1979 until August 2001, at which time the requirements of U.S. government service led him to step down from that position.

From 1980 to 1985, Ambassador Reynolds was co-chairman of Spectrum 7 Energy Corporation, which was active in the oil and gas exploration business. He also served from 1985 to 2001 as Chairman and CEO of Reynolds Plantation, an 8000-acre lake and golf community on Lake Oconee, east of Atlanta, Georgia.

During the 2000 Presidential election campaign, Ambassador Reynolds was co-finance chair in Ohio for the Bush/Cheney campaign and was a member of the Bush/Cheney national executive finance committee. After the election, he was asked by President-elect George W. Bush to be co-chairman of the Presidential Inauguration Committee.

Ambassador Reynolds' interest in foreign affairs led him to serve on the advisory board of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. He has also been actively involved in the board of the Bridging the Rift Foundation, located on the Jordan/Israel border. The foundation seeks to build bridges between people through programs involving economic development, cutting-edge research, and advanced educational opportunities.

A strong believer in volunteer community service work, Ambassador Reynolds has participated in Summerbridge, a civic organization devoted to tutoring inner-city youth in Cincinnati. He has also been campaign chairman for the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families, a group focused on fighting pornography and child abuse. He has been a fundraiser for the United Way charity and the Fine Arts Funds. In addition, he has served on the University of North Carolina Educational Foundation and the University of Cincinnati executive committee.

Ambassador Reynolds is married to Gabrielle Reynolds. The Reynolds have five children.