

**Opening Remarks – Ambassador David D. Pearce**  
**February 25, 2009**  
**Reception for USport Delegation**

Ladies and Gentlemen and Coaches of Algeria's future basketball stars:

It is a great pleasure to be here this evening as we celebrate the completion of the third phase of the USport program, a three-part, two-year exchange program that began two years ago on February 17, 2007. It began with one week of sports clinics here in Algeria, followed by a training program for 28 outstanding coaches in the United States, and has concluded with skills clinics for young players and their coaches in Algeria during this past week. I am honored and happy to say that this is our third program of cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Algerian Basketball Federation in support of youth basketball in Algeria. This year also marked the first time that the USport team contributed the cost of the international airfare for the 6 participants, showing the depth of their commitment to this project.

This program is unique, because it focuses on the many dimensions of coaching young people. Basketball is not only about good ball handling skills -- dribbling, passing, and shooting; basketball is also about teamwork, communication, sportsmanship and leadership. These skills serve players on

the court and in life and the men and women gathered here today represent the teachers and mentors who instill these values in Algeria's youth through their coaching and dedication.

I would like to thank the Ministry, the Federation, and USport for the kind and generous support of this program. We look forward to many such programs of this kind in the future as we continue to explore various paths of collaboration between the United States and Algeria.

Thank you.