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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### ***General William E. Ward, Commander of U.S. Africa Command Visits Mauritius***

General William E. Ward, Commander of U.S. Africa Command arrived in Mauritius yesterday afternoon for a one-day visit. This is the first visit of General Ward to the island, and the first-ever visit to Mauritius by a Commander of the U.S. Africa Command, which was established in October 2007.

This morning General Ward led a roundtable discussion with the local media on the purpose of his visit to Mauritius before departing for his first appointment for the day with the Commissioner of Police, followed by courtesy calls on the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Arvin Boolell and Prime Minister Dr. Navin Ramgoolam.

During the roundtable discussion with the media, General Ward stressed the commitment of the U.S. Africa Command to work as a partner with nations sharing common goals and values, whether on sustained maritime security, military engagement or humanitarian issues such as disaster relief programs. General Ward also elaborated on threats other than Somali piracy to which the Indian Ocean and Africa are exposed, such as illegal fishing, smuggling, human trafficking and drugs.

General William E. (Kip) Ward became the first commander of U.S. Africa Command in Stuttgart, Germany, on October 1, 2007. U.S. Africa Command is one of six unified geographic commands within the Department of Defense unified command structure.

Prior to assuming his current position, General Ward was Deputy Commander, Headquarters U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany. He previously served as the Deputy Commanding General/Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army. While in this capacity he was selected by the Secretary of State to serve as the United States Security Coordinator, Israel - Palestinian Authority where he served from March through December 2005.

For a detailed bio of General Ward and further information on U.S. Africa Command, please go to: <http://www.africom.mil/>