

**Remarks**  
**Ambassador Lewis A. Lukens**  
**AmCham Back to Business Reception**  
**Chief of Mission Residence**  
**November 20, 2013**

*(As prepared)*

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the “Back to Business” reception. Last year, we started bringing together members of AmCham and the broader business community after the summer vacation months, as we gear up for the year ahead. I am delighted to continue that initiative with this gathering tonight. I would like to recognize AmCham President Makha Sy and his team for supporting this reception, and all of their tireless efforts to promote U.S. trade and investment in Senegal. I would also like to thank the sponsors of this reception, South African Airways, CFAO Motors and CGA Assurances.

This has been one eventful year! The visits of President Sall to Washington and President Obama to Senegal this year have provided a tremendous boost to our bilateral relationship, not least our economic relationship. President Obama placed a great emphasis on our economic engagement during his visit to Africa. He spoke of creating opportunity in Africa through unleashing “the power of entrepreneurship and markets.” Since the visit, we continue to sense strong interest in Washington and from the U.S. business community in expanding U.S. trade and investment in Senegal.

AmCham members are at the forefront of these efforts. You are building a stronger and deeper commercial and economic relationship through diverse business ventures that bring U.S. goods and services. AmCham has also played an active role in working with the Embassy and the Government of Senegal to create an AGOA committee that has convened a series of meetings to explore avenues for expanding Senegalese exports to the U.S. under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. By working to promote bilateral trade and investment, AmCham and its members are contributing to Senegal’s economic development. As AmCham prepares for another busy year, we look forward to working with AmCham to organize USA Week next year to highlight the contributions of U.S. companies in Senegal.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce two visitors from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), Michael McNulty and Mark Paist. As many of you may know, OPIC is an independent U.S. agency that offers financing, political risk insurance and other financial services to promote U.S. investment abroad. Michael and Mark are here in Senegal looking for business for OPIC. They have met with a number of companies and organizations during the last three days, and OPIC is already pursuing several projects in Senegal. I encourage companies that may be interested in OPIC services to introduce yourselves and your projects to

Michael and Mark. We also have some information on OPIC available to take with you as you leave along with information on President Obama's Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) that will begin accepting applications early next month. And we look forward to welcoming more visitors from OPIC and the U.S. Export-Import Bank in the months ahead as these institutions can play an important role in financing U.S. trade and investment.

Once again, I want to thank you all for coming. We look forward to working with AmCham and its members in the months ahead to further strengthen U.S.-Senegal business ties. Enjoy the evening!