

**Welcoming remarks for DCM Sandra Clark  
GHSA Roadmap Discussions  
King Fahd Palace, Dakar  
June 2, 2015**

*(As prepared)*

Welcome to (Insert senior GoS representatives) and all of you who have taken time out of your busy schedules to attend this important meeting. It marks a critical point in the development of a road map for health investment in West Africa.

I am pleased that U.S. government, through USAID, the Department of State, the Centers for Disease Control and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency is hosting this meeting for the Global Health Security Agenda, or GHSA, in Senegal.

The meeting underscores the commitment of the United States to make the world a more safe and secure place through improved response to emerging disease threats.

In his 2011 speech at the United Nations General Assembly, President Obama called upon all countries to come together to prevent, detect, and fight biological threats before they become epidemics.

Senegal has a special role to play in working with the U.S. government to advance the Agenda. The GHSA offers Senegal new possibilities to strengthen health systems and to prevent and reduce the likelihood of future outbreaks.

In the past year, we have witnessed the success of Senegal in protecting the country from the threat of Ebola. The U.S. government is proud to have been a partner in those efforts.

As a result, the longstanding relationship between the U.S. and Senegal has strengthened and evolved.

Rapid response to disease threats requires multi-sectorial, international collaboration.

That is why we are here today. Together, we can coordinate our actions to prevent epidemics, detect biological threats and create a GHSA roadmap for Senegal for the next five years.

We have made progress toward a comprehensive, global system to respond to biological threats. However, there is still much work to do to achieve the objectives outlined in the Global Health Security Agenda.

As Secretary of State John Kerry has stated, building long-term healthcare capacity in West Africa is a strategic security priority.

A global health crisis is an attack on human infrastructure, creating instability and stealing progress from everybody.

I trust today's discussions will reinforce how GHSA resources can help Senegal strengthen areas such as integrated disease surveillance and laboratory capacity.

I thank you for participating in these discussions, and am certain that you will contribute to the GHSA roadmap and commit to putting your ideas into action.