

Remarks
Ambassador James P. Zumwalt
Partnership for Illicit Finance Opening Meeting
Hôtel Novotel, Dakar
June 25, 2015

(As prepared)

Minister of Finance Amadou Ba,

Representatives of Senegal, Burkina Faso, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Ethiopia,

Ambassadors, Distinguished Guests,

I am delighted to join you in opening this working group meeting of the Partnership for Illicit Finance. This initiative was announced by President Obama and President Sall at the U.S.-Africa Leadership Summit last August. At the time, President Obama said, "We are here to take action -- concrete steps to build on Africa's progress and forge the partnerships of equals that we seek; tangible steps to deliver more prosperity, more security, and more justice to our citizens." This initial meeting of the Partnership for Illicit Finance is one step towards that common goal.

The Partnership is designed as a forum to discuss best practices for combatting illicit finance flows that undermine governance, hamper foreign investment and reduce economic growth.

I want to thank the Government of Senegal and particularly the Minister of Finance for agreeing to host this meeting. I know there has been a lot of work involved in preparing for this meeting. We deeply appreciate the efforts of your government to make this possible. Senegal's leadership on this initiative is another example of our strong cooperation based on shared values and priorities.

For other delegations that have travelled from around Africa, I want to thank you for making the effort you have taken to travel here and participate in this meeting.

I believe that this meeting and your presence here today can lay the groundwork for members of this Partnership to work together to confront the important challenge of curbing illicit finance.

I am pleased that the U.S. government is well-represented with Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bisa Williams, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Treasury Eric Williams leading our team.

It is a sign of the importance of this initiative to our government that we have two senior U.S. officials leading our delegation.

I would like to pass the floor to Deputy Assistant Secretary Williams who can speak about the objectives of this meeting.