

Remarks by Deputy Chief of Mission Sandra Clark
Senghor House Museum
Dakar, Senegal
Monday, December 7, 2015

(As prepared)

Asalamu Alekum!
Mr. President of the Special Olympics Assane Fall,
Mrs. National Director Rajah Sy,
Special Olympics athletes,

I am delighted to be here today to celebrate with you the International Day of Disabled Persons.

I can't think of a more beautiful and meaningful venue for this event than the Senghor Museum. Thank you Director Mbengue for graciously hosting this event and sharing with us the legacy of Senegal's first President Leopold Sedhar Senghor.

The United States Embassy highly values the work of the Special Olympics committee in Senegal and the support that they receive from their partners in Government and the private sector. President Fall, National Director Sy, and all of you who are part of the Special Olympics family work very hard every day to raise awareness about the challenges faced by disabled persons. Your commitment to ensuring inclusion and access for persons with disabilities through sports and athleticism is admirable.

And to you, the young athletes of the Special Olympics, we intend this concert to be a special gift for you who have worked so hard. Whether you attended the Special Olympics in Los Angeles or participated in the Special Olympics program here in Senegal, you are heroes in my eyes. Your enthusiasm and courage is very inspiring. Let me ask for a round of applause for all of you!

I understand that you brought your medals back from Los Angeles. I am very much looking forward to seeing them after our concert. I hope you will agree to let me take your picture with you as a group.

Please enjoy the performances today by Melody Band, Mad Noise, and Takeifa. These American and Senegalese artists are very excited to be here today and will play together to celebrate the spirit of friendship, joy, and cultural exchange that characterizes the Special Olympics.

Thank you!