

Remarks
Ambassador James P. Zumwalt
Voz de Quélélé Journalist and Technical Staff
Training Program
Bissau, Guinea-Bissau
Friday, March 13, 2015

(As prepared)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Journalists and Media Professionals,

Good afternoon.

I am just about at the end of my first visit to Guinea-Bissau, and what a pleasure it has been to begin to discover your country, your people, and your culture. It is an honor to be here -- with you -- today.

This training program is the result of a grant competition offered by the U.S. Mission to UNESCO in Geneva, Switzerland in September last year. It is also one of the first training opportunities that we have been able to offer following Guinea-Bissau's free and fairly-conducted elections in May and June. We are so pleased to have this opportunity to begin cooperation programs again with Guinea-Bissau.

The United States of America is dedicated to the ideals of a free press, and the positive impacts that journalists like you make on society. In short, it is your reporting -- including your investigative pieces that you discussed at this very program -- that help keep politicians and public officials honest. Your work is very important, and I recognize that it has the potential to be dangerous. Thank you for what you do.

As community radio journalists, you also play the important role of raising the awareness of members of your community about issues such as health, elections, public work, education -- and many others.

So thank you for taking the time to spend in this program, among some very experienced journalists who trained you this week. I wish each one of you continued success in your profession, and encourage each one of you to continue to report the truth.