

**INAUGURATION CEREMONY
OF THE NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDING
AT ATOME, OGOU PREFECTURE, PLATEAU REGION
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2015**

9:00AM

**ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD
AMBASSADOR**

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO TOGO

- Préfet de l'Ogou, Mr. Alagbé Baedjin ;
- Directeur Régional de l'Enseignement ;
- Inspecteur de l'Ogou ;
- Minister Amadou ;
- Honorable BoukpeSSI
- Minister Adjamagbo

- DEAR PARENTS,
- DEAR TEACHERS,
- DEAR STUDENTS,

I am honored to appear before you today on behalf of the Government of the United States of America to express our satisfaction at the inauguration of your new school building. I am particularly proud to be here today, because this is the first time I have inaugurated a project in Togo with my personal likeness. I congratulate the talented local artist (NAME) for a job well done.

The United States Government has several funds available which serve as tools, giving communities the means to address the urgent needs of local development. Over the last twenty years, about four hundred projects have been implemented in Togo through these programs. More than fourteen million dollars (more than seven billion cfa) in development aid was given to Togo through the Embassy of the United States last year alone. Many of our projects are school buildings, like this one.

I congratulate the entire community that has worked together to contribute to the completion of this school. I also congratulate the government, traditional and religious leaders for their support. The United States Department of Defense Humanitarian Assistance Program gave the funds to build this school, but it is through your will that the construction of this building was achieved.

Dear students, the Embassy of the United States of America continues to support the construction of schools throughout Togo for a simple reason. We believe that all children have the right to go to school, with constant support and encouragement from their parents and community leaders. The true purpose of this school is to inspire you to work hard to gain an education, so that you will have the tools needed to succeed in the modern world.

Dear parents and teachers, let me invite you to teach all children, boys and girls, from an early age. Give them knowledge of their rights and responsibilities to facilitate their development.

Fight such evils as child labor and child trafficking, which are direct consequences of under-education, reduce children's future prospects, and impede the economic development of the entire community.

Education is a weapon that can truly fight these problems. This is why the Embassy of the United States of America to Togo supports expanded access to quality education as one of its highest priorities. I applaud your community's efforts to support education for all children here. Please use this beautiful building for the effective development of the community's most precious resource, its children, which are its future leaders.

Thank you for inviting me to share your joy at the inauguration of your new school.