



Remarks

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English Language Day

Dakar, Senegal - March 2, 2013

(As prepared)

The Honorable Minister of Education,

The Honorable Rector of Cheikh Anta Diop University (or the Dean of the Department of Archivists and Library Sciences at Cheikh Anta Diop University),

The Honorable Ambassador of Indonesia,

The Representative of the British Council,

The President of the Association of Teachers of English in Senegal,

The President of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TEE-SOL),

The Representative of Maryland of TESOL,

Educators, teachers, and students,

Good morning.

Thank you very much for welcoming me to the fifteenth celebration of English Language Day in Senegal. It is great to be back on the campus of Cheikh Anta Diop University.

The United States supports educational opportunities for all youth. We have seen that access to education creates gateways to increasing the potential for greater economic prosperity. President Obama believes in the importance of education, and education cuts across all pillars of the U.S. strategy for sub-Saharan Africa.

The State Department and USAID work together to fulfill that strategy. USAID has built schools throughout rural Senegal, and supports various programs in primary education and literacy. Just recently, we announced USAID-funded full scholarships for 110

Senegalese to earn scholarships for study at the Bachelor and Master levels, most here in Senegal and several in the United States.

Through the Public Affairs Section, we support well-known exchange and scholarship programs, such as the prestigious Fulbright Program. Of course we also support various English language programs, such as this superb and worthy event!

English Language Day is a wonderful reason to be at Cheikh Anta Diop University! I am always happy to meet English learners and teachers. Congratulations to those who organized this exciting event and especially to the teachers and students brought together here by their love of the English language.

I would like to recognize the efforts of the members of the Association of Teachers of English in Senegal -- ATES -- (*AH-tess*) and especially the board of ATES for your tireless dedication to improving the quality of English education in Senegal. The work you do with teachers and students is invaluable and we appreciate your constant and sustained efforts.

As you are all aware, English has become much more than a subject to study. It is a medium which unites people in amazing ways:

- doctors around the world publish research findings in English and collaborate to save people's lives;
- airline pilots communicate with control towers in English;
- tourists ask for directions in English;
- universities around the world offer courses in English;
- and people use social media -- such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs -- to connect with people in other countries. English makes this happen!

Every day, more and more Senegalese decide to learn about America through English, which we of course love and encourage.

Bringing Senegalese and Americans together through English language learning is a major focus of our Public Affairs Section and the Regional English Language Office at the American Embassy.

Through them, we offer a number of highly-successful English language programs:

- our English Language Fellow program brings experienced teachers to Senegal to teach English;
- our *Access* program offers free afterschool English lessons for over 800 Senegalese teens throughout the country;
- and we provide support to institutions around Senegal that further English language learning.

Finally, for the past year we have been promoting the website *American English Online*. Please visit the site -- you can find hundreds of resources which are all related to teaching and learning English.

It also offers numerous resources for learning more about American culture. You can also find the brand new English language video game, Trace Effects, on this website.

You can hear more about these programs and other resources from our Embassy at the booths outside. We have one booth with information about our American Information Center resources, and another about studying in the United States.

You can also contact our Regional English Language Officer, John Silver, today or at any time about these materials and programs.

English is not a better language than any other, but it has become the essential language for business, industry and making friends in the twenty-first century.

So thank you teachers for helping your students to learn English and for helping them to communicate with the world.

Thank you, ATEES, for organizing such events where we can use and practice English.

And thank you for inviting me to speak to you today – in English. I wish you a very successful day.