



**Remarks  
Chargé Sandra Clark  
Africa Partnership Station Press Conference  
Dakar, on board The Rotterdam  
September 10, 2013**

Many thanks to the Dutch Ambassador. I would like to begin by thanking both our Dutch and Senegalese hosts, as well as the forces of all the other participating nations: Spain, the United Kingdom, and of course the United States. The arrival of the “Rotterdam” marks the sixth time a ship has visited Senegal under the Africa Partnership Station – or APS – program. And this is in fact the second time that the APS ship has been Dutch, with the first being the Johan de Witt in 2009.

APS is a long-term program in which the United States, in conjunction with our allies, seeks to engage and partner with African Navies through training and collaborative activities. APS is but one aspect of the United States’ maritime security cooperation program here in Senegal. This cooperation ranges from training courses taught in classrooms on shore, to multinational exercises like Saharan Express – which last year brought together 11 different Western and African Navies off the coast of Senegal. This operation also includes at-sea operations like the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership – in which American or European ships and aircraft partner with West African Navies to patrol West African waters.

The unifying principal behind this diverse group of events is maritime security. That is, the ability of nations here in West Africa to effectively monitor and police their own waters and inland waterways. And by working towards improved maritime security, we are truly working in the interest of every country represented here tonight: If Senegal is better able to combat threats like the trafficking of narcotics or illegal fishing, then the region becomes a safer, more

secure, and more prosperous place. And if West Africa is a safer and more prosperous, that leads to improved security in both the United States and Europe as well.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish best of luck to all the forces taking part in this training program. The skills that you will be learning, if properly applied, will help improve the lives of the citizens of all our nations.

Thank you for your kind attention.