



Remarks

**Sandra Clark, Chargé d'affaires, a.i.
English Language Day
Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar
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(As prepared)

Thank you very much for welcoming me to the 16th annual English Language Day. I am always happy to visit the campus of Cheikh Anta Diop University, and it is great to be here with you today.

English Language Day is a wonderful occasion to get us all together here at the university. Thank you to those who organized this exciting event, and Happy English Language Day to all the teachers brought together here by their love of the English language. Happy 16th anniversary!

I would like to recognize the efforts of the members of the Association of Teachers of English in Senegal ATES -- and especially the board of ATES -- for your tireless dedication to improving the quality of English education in Senegal.

The theme of this year's English Language Day is "Test Taking Skills for the National Exams." I understand that many learners have been disappointed with their results on the BAC and BFEM tests. The new format of the English Language Day -- which will allow you to explore ways to improve classroom practice and test taking skills and strategies -- should help you help your students. We are proud to a part of the important act of helping students perform more successfully in the classroom.

You, teachers are helping people unite through English in amazing ways. The ATES spelling bee, Students' Day, and National Convention are all great examples of your contributions to connecting your students to the greater world through English.

I am pleased that more and more Senegalese are deciding to learn about America through English. More and more students are enrolling in English classes every year. The number of Senegalese universities offering English classes is also rising. I know that you are interested in introducing Senegalese children to English at younger ages than previously was done. Bringing Senegalese and Americans together through English Language learning is a major focus of our Public Affairs Section and Regional English Language Office at the Embassy. We have a number of highly-successful English language programs, which our Regional English Language Officer, John Silver, will tell you about. He and his colleagues can also share additional print and electronic materials with you.

English has become an essential language, a language of international communication. All over the world, people are learning English as a second or third language, as they realize its potential to facilitate communication. It is a dynamic and adaptable language, shaped by history and by the cultures of those who speak it. It even includes some Wolof words – such as banana – a testament to its ability to absorb vocabulary from many cultures. So thank you teachers for helping your students to learn English and for helping them to communicate with the world.

Thank you ATES 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 English Language Day.