

**Remarks
Ambassador Jim Zumwalt**

Earth Day Tree Planting

**John F. Kennedy Girls' School, Dakar
April 28, 2015**

(As prepared)

Thank you to **Lycée J F Kennedy** and Mme Fatimata Sow SARR for inviting me here today. I am pleased to meet with you to talk about Earth Day. And I am excited to plant a tree with you.

Earth Day began in 1970, when Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, saw the disastrous impact of an oil spill. He wanted to raise Americans' awareness of the environment and decided to sponsor a day to celebrate the Earth. Since then, every year in April Americans participate in Earth Day activities. They plant trees, clean up parks, and educate their friends about the importance of the environment clean.

Today, we celebrate Earth Day here in Senegal! There are many things that you can do to protect the environment of this beautiful country. You can throw your trash away in a trash can. This keeps the beaches, schools and your city clean and protects wildlife. You can conserve water and bring your own water bottle instead of buying plastic bottles or bags. You can reuse bags and containers instead of throwing them away.

Earth Day is a time to educate ourselves about how to better protect our environment. I hope you will take the time to study, protect and nurture the environment for your well-being and that of future generations.

Another important part about Earth Day is taking action. That's why we are planting trees at your school today. Trees not only provide beauty, but also help clean the air we breathe.

I hope you will all do your part today and every day to celebrate Earth Day!