

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador James Zumwalt
Swearing-In Ceremony for Peace Corps Volunteers
Dakar, Sénégal – Friday, May, 8, 2015

(As prepared)

[Senior government officials]
Messieurs les Représentants des corps de volontaires nationaux et internationaux,
Messieurs les Chefs de Services et Représentants des Ministères,
Madame la Directrice nationale du Corps de la Paix,
Mesdames, Mesdemoiselles, Messieurs les Invités,
Chers Volontaires et Stagiaires,

I am delighted to welcome you to today's ceremony. It is a privilege for me to swear into service the 60 Health and Community Economic Development Peace Corps trainees gathered here today.

When we met in Thiès in early March, you had recently arrived in Senegal, and I promised you that we would meet again for your swearing-in. I am proud of your accomplishments over the past 2½ months. Your training has been hard work so I congratulate you on your success and look forward to hearing your new language skills. In joining one of the largest and most renowned Peace Corps programs in the world, you will have the chance to contribute to sustainable development efforts and to Senegalese-American friendship.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff at Peace Corps' Thiès Training Center who played an essential role in preparing you for your assignments. I also thank in advance all the officials here today, whose organizations and offices will host you and support your work in your communities.

Peace Corps embodies the best of America: service to others in the pursuit of peace and development. Many say, and I agree, that it is one of America's best investments in development and in people-to-people relations.

You will do important work in each of your communities. The Health Volunteers who served before you have done tremendous work in helping to prevent and treat malaria, to improve maternal and child health, and to adopt best practices in health, water and sanitation. The Community Economic Development Volunteers have made significant contributions towards

enhancing business growth and job creation, increasing productivity and income of women's and youth groups, and increasing financial management at the household level.

The Peace Corps program in Senegal has a long and rich 50 year history. It is a true partnership between the peoples and governments of Senegal and the United States. Since the arrival of the first group in 1963, over 3,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have completed their service in this fine country. This year, you become part of that proud family and tradition of making the world a better place.

Many former Volunteers have gone on to become business leaders, members of Congress, educators, development workers and diplomats. Clearly, the Peace Corps program has equally benefited both countries.

As you prepare to begin your assignments in Health and Community Economic Development, I congratulate each of you on your successful completion of training and wish you well, as you integrate into your communities. While I currently serve as the US Ambassador to Senegal, in many ways, you will be ambassadors in your respective communities. And so, on behalf of the United States government, I thank you for your commitment, and I wish you all the best for your service to come.

Now, please rise and repeat after me as I administer the oath of service:

*I (state your name), do solemnly swear (or affirm)
That I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States
against all enemies, domestic or foreign,
That I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or
purpose of evasion,
And that I will well and faithfully discharge my duties in the Peace Corps,
So help me God.*

Congratulations! You are now Peace Corps Volunteers!
