

Remarks
Ambassador James P. Zumwalt
Ribbon-Cutting of Self-Help Project:
Reception Center (AMIC)
Bissau, Guinea-Bissau
Wednesday, March 11, 2015

(As prepared)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Boys and Girls,

Good afternoon.

During this first visit to Guinea-Bissau, I am pleased to discover your country, your people, and your culture. It is an honor to be here -- with you -- today. Thank you for joining me at this ribbon-cutting of AMIC, supported by the Ambassador's Self-Help Grant Program. The Embassy of the United States of America has been a strategic partner of AMIC in the defense and promotion of human rights in Guinea-Bissau. In 1997, the *Association of Bandim Women* (or "AMUBA") used our funding to purchase sewing equipment and initiate a literacy program.

Today we have come together to officially open a Welcome Center, which will provide information and opportunities to educate, reorient, and guide children in precarious situations. This gift of the American people will increase AMIC's responsiveness to help children who need it the most.

The Ambassador's Self-Help Grant Program decided to support this Center because the fight against trafficking and all forms of child abuse are among our core values.

This ribbon-cutting is a re-affirmation of:

- our commitment to prevention of trafficking-in-persons;
- to help those who wish to return; and
- to reintegrate children who are trafficking victims.

I look forward to hearing about these young people who I expect will successfully reintegrate into their native communities.

Thank you for taking your time to spend with us today. I wish each one of you peace, health, happiness -- and a bright future.