



**Remarks by David A. Sampson
Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce
Hospital Fann – Pfizer Site Visit
Dakar, Senegal
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[Text As Prepared for Delivery.]**

Thank you for that kind introduction. It is my pleasure to be here today on behalf of President Bush and the U.S. Department of Commerce to recognize this extremely important project.

I want to acknowledge Pfizer, my colleagues from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as all the Senegalese government and civilian representatives with us here today.

The timing of this announcement is excellent. It sends a clear signal that all of us gathered in Senegal this week from the United States and across Africa are serious about strengthening civil society, commercial relations and results-based economic development.

These kinds of programs are a major part of President Bush's AIDS relief plan. His plan is the largest commitment ever by a single nation to an international health initiative ... a five-year \$15 billion effort to combat AIDS in more than 100 nations.

I've been in economic development most of my professional life ... first as the head of economic development in Arlington, Texas... then for the state of Texas... and most recently as the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at the Commerce Department

Throughout my career I have seen over and over that, to accomplish real and lasting goals, like the ones before us in Africa, the private sector is the key engine for growth.

Throughout American history, our society has thrived only when government tapped into the power of market forces and built a strong civil society.

Governments must ensure conditions of transparency, create proper infrastructure, and defend the rule of law so that business can do what it does best: innovate, create jobs, and create wealth..

And, often, they do more than that. Today, American businesses are playing a vital role in economic and social development efforts across Africa and around the world.

The U.S. private sector not only provides direct funding assistance, but also makes large-scale investments in human capital development, technology transfer, capacity building and logistical support.

Pfizer alone has invested millions of dollars, first-class manpower, and countless hours into meeting the developing world's huge healthcare needs.

In Africa, I believe that the values and practices of America's "corporate citizens" serve as a very powerful model – not only to government leaders working to build the democratic societies and market-based economies in their countries, but also to the continent's local businesses who are playing an increasingly important role in their communities.

Government must do everything we can to ensure that the businesspeople operating in Africa have what they need to create long-lasting, sustainable and successful ventures.

We are also opening a new commercial office here in Dakar to help U.S. companies develop business relationships with local firms throughout Western Africa. I'll cut that ribbon tomorrow.

For today, it gives me great pleasure to witness Pfizer's important donation of Diflucan to Hospital Fann. Pfizer's drug donation program in Sub-Saharan Africa will mark its five-year anniversary in December.

As President Bush recently said, "Across the continent Africans are learning that HIV need not be a death sentence. Access to new drugs and new treatments is dramatically extending and improving lives."

Many thanks to Pfizer and to all our companies who show tremendous stewardship. It is our privilege to work with them.

Thank you again for inviting me.