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SPEECHES 2007

Educational Perspectives Chapter(s) Launch

Venue: U.S. Mission, Dar es Salaam

August 9, 2007

Remarks by Ambassador Michael L. Retzer

Habari za asubuhi?

Waheshimiwa Wageni Waalikwa (Honorable invited guests)

Bishop Baganza of the Karagwe Diocese
Students and Faculty of the University of Dar es Salaam
Students of the Johns Hopkins University
Other Chapter Representatives of Educational Perspectives

Mabibi na mabwana (Ladies and Gentlemen)

Karibuni ubalozi wa marekani! (Welcome to the American Embassy)

It is my pleasure to welcome you this morning to learn more about the Educational Perspectives student volunteer group from the United States. I am told we also have a volunteer from the EP chapter in Hong Kong, China joining us this morning. **Karibuni!** (Welcome!) I am sure you will all hear that often over the next couple of weeks.

I am proud to be hosting you as we help launch the first chapters of Educational Perspectives here in Africa. It is a pleasure to finally meet Ms. Carmen Kut. She is the primary reason we are all here today. Carmen first contacted me last December and asked if I, the American Ambassador to Tanzania, would be interested in hosting her volunteer organization to launch peace chapters here. I immediately seized upon this opportunity.

Although Tanzania has historically been an island of peace in an often unstable neighborhood, this country has still experienced violence. Just two days ago, we commemorated the 9th anniversary of the August 7th East African Embassy bombings. And today, we still face the potential for violence, if the Zanzibar question does not get resolved. Hopefully the leadership of CCM and CUF will come to an accord in the near future.

Meanwhile, I am proud of these young volunteers who have come all the way to Tanzania to share some of their knowledge and experiences with Tanzanian youth, both here on the mainland and in Zanzibar.

Today we are launching Educational Perspectives chapters for the University of Dar es Salaam and Karagwe Secondary School ("KARASECO"). Fourteen of the EP members left this morning to travel to Karagwe to carry out their volunteer service projects. One of my Presidential Management Fellows will travel there to join them this weekend. EP members will also travel to Pemba to inaugurate chapters at Utaani Secondary

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School and Benjamin Mkapa Teachers College in Wete. My Cultural Affairs Officer will pay you a visit next week. As you can see, the Educational Perspectives volunteers are covering all the corners of this country.

EP volunteers will be engaging Tanzanian youth in English language and cultural programs. And they will also be imparting health education specifically to combat the scourge of HIV/AIDS. I hope that everywhere you go, you will share with the Tanzanians there that we are all proud of the example set by President Kikwete and Mama Kikwete when they both got tested last month.

President Bush himself has dedicated a significant amount of resources--over 200 million U.S. dollars this year--and next year we will increase our contribution of PEPFAR--the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief--funding to over 300 million dollars.

I would again like to offer my congratulations to the students who traveled here from afar for the time you are volunteering here. It is such a generous gift to the Tanzanian people. Your presence here exemplifies the best spirit and goodwill of the American people. I often tell young people visiting Tanzania that they too are ambassadors of the United States.

I hope that you will enjoy your time in Tanzania and return home with warm memories to share with family and friends. I also hope that you will encourage other Americans to follow in your footsteps and visit. I am sure the Tanzanians will enjoy spending time with you. I hope that you will be able to lay the foundation to build some lasting relationships. It is these types of people to people experiences that truly bring our two nations closer together.

I am proud the U.S. Government was able to play a role in the work you are about to undertake throughout Tanzania. I would like to offer my best wishes to the students at the schools you have partnered with here in Tanzania. I am truly honored that you allowed me the privilege of hosting you today. Again, thank you for helping to further strengthen the bond between the United States of America and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Asanteni sana! (Thank you very much!)

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