



March 8, 2010

**Remarks by Robert E. Whitehead**  
**Chargé d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy - Khartoum**

**on the occasion of the**  
**Dedication Ceremony: Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School**  
**March 8, 2010**  
**in Kurmuk, Blue Nile State**

- Blue Nile State Governor Malik Agar;
  - Blue Nile State Minister of Education Elagib Abass Zaroug;
  - USAID/Sudan Mission Director William Hammink;
  - Kurmuk Commissioner Sila Musa;
  - Friends and family of John Granville and Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama;
  - USAID partners;
  - Kurmuk community members;
  - Members of the press;
- Thank you for joining us on International Women's Day for the dedication of the Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School, in Kurmuk. The United States Government, Governor Malik Agar of Blue Nile State along with the people of Blue Nile State today honor the memory of John Granville and Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama by naming this girls' secondary school after them.

- John Granville, an American diplomat who worked for the United States Agency for International Development, and his Sudanese colleague, Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama, tragically lost their lives a little more than two years ago in a crime that caused great sadness to both the people of the United States and the people of Sudan. The memory of John and Abdelrahman remains alive and is honored by the establishment of a school, your school, that will transform the lives of its enthusiastic pupils and provide the girls with an education that will ultimately help them contribute to Sudan's future.
- John Granville lived and worked in Kurmuk and held fond memories of the community, his friends and colleagues here. Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama, a dedicated USAID employee, was valued for his service to development work in Sudan and to his country.
- The spirit of John Granville and Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama is here with us as we inaugurate this modern girls' school, designed as a model for the region. The school is a lasting testament to their love for and commitment to the people of Sudan.
- It is fitting that we dedicate the Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School on International Women's Day to underscore the importance of educating girls.

When girls receive an education, the family and the community greatly benefit.

- Girls' education increases the health status of families and households. An educated young woman has a wider choice of economic opportunities, improved social standing within her community and enjoys enhanced social and political empowerment. As a mother, she is more likely to harbor a long-term vision for her children.
- The future of Blue Nile State and of Sudan as a whole stand to benefit from the opportunities these girls receive as they become better educated and enter adulthood better prepared to face the challenges ahead.
- After the many years of conflict that left the schools of Blue Nile State in rubble and many young people with few options for education, this new school is a symbol of Sudan's promising future. It is a beacon of hope that Sudan's best days are to come.
- The school includes three sets of classrooms, a cafeteria, laboratory, library, dormitories, latrines and showers as well as teachers' offices and lodging. A learning center, attached to the school, provides the students with Internet access and computer training. To inaugurate the school library and develop a culture of reading, the U.S. Embassy has donated a twelve-box set of My

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Arabic Library, eighty American classics for children, translated into Arabic. Blue Nile State Ministry of Education has graciously committed to providing teachers for the school and to covering the school's operating costs.

- Thirty-eight girls are now enrolled in the Granville-Abbas Girls Secondary School. Once it is fully operative, the school will be able to accommodate 120 girls. I call upon the community to ensure that all of-age girls be given the opportunity to receive an education and help fill the school to its intended capacity.
- The Government of the United States of America looks forward to ongoing collaboration and cooperation with the Blue Nile State Ministry of Education as we work together to improve the quality of children's basic education and access to institutions of learning in Sudan.
- I thank USAID and the Office of Transition Initiatives for having provided the project funding and for working in collaboration with American implementing partners AECOM and Creative Associates International. AECOM constructed the school, while Creative Associates International is managing Health, Education, and Reconciliation (HEAR) Sudan, or HEAR, a project that increases children's access to quality education and health-care through community support.

**Embassy of the United States of America  
Khartoum, Sudan**

- Thank you for joining us today to collectively dedicate the Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School in remembrance of John, in remembrance of Abdelrahman, and as a tribute to their lives of commitment in serving others.

“Asalaamu Alekum”

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