



**Remarks of USAID Acting Administrator
Alonzo L. Fulgham
on the occasion of
The Juba Commercial Secondary School Inauguration
October 26, 2009**

Honorable Members of the Government,
Education Sector Partners,
Distinguished Guests, and
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very pleased to be here today as we inaugurate this beautifully refurbished Juba Commercial Secondary School to the Government of Southern Sudan's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Central Equatoria State Ministry of Education. The invitation to join you here today as you celebrate these new facilities is one of the high points of my Africa trip.

Two decades of civil war left this school in such disrepair that it barely functioned as a learning institution. Roofs leaked, floors cracked and dangerous construction materials filled the air in classrooms which were virtually unusable in the rainy season. The school was originally built in 1949, and after 60 years it was high time for rehabilitation. Today the school is a clean, comfortable and welcoming facility for its nearly 500 students.

So much progress has been made in Southern Sudan since the signing of the CPA. Of all the "peace dividends" delivered since then, your government's strides in education must be the greatest. The commitment made by both the Government of Southern Sudan and the state Ministries of Education has been robust and effective.

The education of its young people is the single most important investment any nation can make. In fact, education is nation-building at its most essential, and a strong and well-educated generation of young people is fundamental to building a stable, democratic and economically prosperous society.

USAID has made a commitment to the people of Southern Sudan to help you proceed from post-conflict to peace and stability. That commitment is most visible in our investments in education and infrastructure. Across Southern Sudan, USAID is constructing roads and buildings, broadening access to markets and supporting economies. While access to new markets is growing, so too is access to quality education.

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Khartoum, Sudan**

USAID supports both curriculum development and the ability of young people to benefit from that development. The Southern Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction program extends access to quality educational content for both students and teachers. The Gender Equity through Education program ensures that even the most marginalized young people can attend school and move on to change society.

The popularity of Interactive Radio Instruction has provided an opportunity for USAID to extend quality curriculum to those districts with beautiful new schools as well as those who still hold classes outdoors. Beloved by students and teachers alike, the program proves that you need more than just clean structures to make education happen.

The radio instruction allows teachers to feel their power to transform ideas and students to see the possibilities before them. The Gender Equity through Education program has so far touched the lives of 84 students in this school, making certain that those who want to learn, can.

Along with the Juba Commercial Secondary School, two others – the Sadaka Primary and the Atlabara West Basic Primary School – have been rehabilitated with USAID assistance. These transformed structures offer Juba clean, fresh spaces in which education can flourish.

Education is the nourishment on which Southern Sudan will grow strong. USAID is proud to expand access to quality education, be it through new educational spaces, exciting programming or by offering a broader cross-section of students educational opportunities.

I want to thank UNOPS for a job well done. I'd like to thank the Government of Southern Sudan and the Central Equatoria State Ministry of Education for this opportunity to assist you. We are very proud of this partnership and pleased to be a part of Southern Sudan's future.

Thank you.

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