



Millennium Challenge Corporation Mozambique Compact Signing Ceremony

John Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State

Washington, DC

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DEPUTY SECRETARY NEGROPONTE: Thank you, Ambassador Danilovich. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I'm honored to welcome our distinguished guests from Mozambique, including Your Excellency President Guebuza; Minister Cuereinea, Minister of Development and Planning; other honored ministers as well as Ambassador Panguene. I would also like to recognize Assistant Secretary Jendayi Frazer, Ambassador-designate Steiger, other distinguished ambassadors as well as the MCC board member Mr. Alan Patricof. I'm also delighted to see that here today we have with us Congressman Don Payne, a good friend from my days as representative to the United Nations when he used to visit us with frequency, and my old friend Jim Colby who has played such an instrumental role in the development and promotion and administration of both our trade and assistance policies over the years and is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement from the Congress. And he looks a lot less careworn than he did in the days when I knew him in the Congress.

I would like to welcome you all to the State Department and thank you for joining us on this important day. Mozambique and the United States enjoy a good and steadfast friendship. When peace finally took root in Mozambique in 1992, the United States directed resources to bolster development, becoming the largest bilateral donor of aid. And today with the signing of the Compact between Mozambique and the Millennium Challenge Corporation we enter a new chapter in our dynamic partnership for development.

A highlight of First Lady Laura Bush's visit to Mozambique last month was her announcement of our decision to approve Mozambique's \$507 million compact. Both her visit and the development of this ambitious compact are signs of the strength of the United States-Mozambique relations.

As Ambassador Danilovich said, this Compact with Mozambique is our twelfth to date. MCC's total commitment to our 12 compact partner countries now totals close to \$3.5 billion. More than \$2 billion of that amount has been directed to countries in Africa.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation reflects the President's bold vision for a new and transformative approach to foreign assistance built on accountability and responsibility. It is an approach that rewards countries for ruling justly, investing in their people's health and education and promoting economic freedom.

Mozambique's diligence and determination to adopt reforms, even difficult ones, and to build the necessary capacity to qualify for MCC funding are commendable and a testament to the deep will of the Mozambican people to pull their country out of poverty and on to the path of prosperity.

Through the compact to be signed today, Mozambicans will break down their specific barriers to poverty reduction and economic growth with a program they envisioned, they designed, they submitted, they will implement and, ultimately, from which they will reap the benefits where it matters most – in the lives of their poor.

While much of the world's attention focuses on Africa's problems, Mozambique stands as a shining example of how solutions are at work on the continent, of how progress is being achieved through a commitment to sound policies, of how the lives of women and girls are improving, and of how investments in infrastructure and land administration are creating investment opportunities, which are the true engine of sustainable development and growth.

We applaud the people and Government of Mozambique for pursuing this path with a resolve and commitment that will bring growth and opportunity to all corners of the country, uniting the thriving south with the northern provinces, which stand to benefit considerably from the MCC's investment.

I wish especially to commend the leadership of President Guebuza for his personal interest in the success of the MCC Compact, in fighting poverty through economic growth.

I congratulate President Guebuza and the people of Mozambique for reaching this momentous milestone in their development, and now it is my honor to now yield this podium to you, Mr. President. Thank you very much

(Applause.)

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