



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

HSV SWIFT (HSV 2)
FPO AE 09587-7246

IN REPLY REFER TO
4900
CTU 365.1.1
23 Jul 09

From: Commander, Task Unit 365.1.1 (African Partnership Station SWIFT)
To: Director, Project Handclasp

Subj: DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECT HANDCLASP MATERIALS BY HSV SWIFT IN DAKAR,
SENEGAL

1. HSV SWIFT completed her first port visit in support of Africa Partnership Station to Dakar, Senegal 16-18 July 2009. During the 3 day visit to Dakar, SWIFT had the pleasure of delivering 143,000 pre-packaged, high-nutritional meals on 20 pallets to the non-government organization, Cavalry Productions (CAPRO). The high nutritional meals were consigned material donated from "Kids Against Hunger" to CAPRO. CAPRO is a non-denominational, Christian charity organization with 7 ministries throughout Senegal. CAPRO's main effort is in the capital city of Dakar. With a population of over 3 million people and an unemployment rate of 50%, there are an estimated 850,000 malnourished individuals in Dakar alone. While SWIFT's crew of military and civilian personnel offloaded the 20 pallets to vehicles on the pier, I had the opportunity to speak with Pastor Eloi Dogue, the head pastor for the CAPRO Dakar chapter.

2. Pastor Dogue was very grateful for the donation from "Kids Against Hunger" and appreciative of the fact that very few organizations exist that have the lift/supply capacity of the U.S. Navy to go anywhere in the world. He also stated that the timely delivery of the meals, prior to the rainy season, would maximize the benefit to the children they will be distributed to. During the rainy season there is no crop harvesting and those who depend on the crops must survive through the rainy season. Often the children are the ones who suffer during the rainy season because the adults consume most of what little food there is so that they are fit and able to harvest the next crop. Pastor Dogue spoke of the many poverty stricken areas of Dakar and greater Senegal. The main reasons for poverty in Senegal are lack of education, unemployment, lack of infrastructure and social services to support the increasing population and government policies that perpetuate the disenfranchisement of the poor and uneducated. Pastor Dogue readily admits that his ministry and those like them are not equipped nor manned to make true improvements on the problems of Dakar but he like many feel they must do something, however small, to relieve the suffering of the poor.

3. These 143,000 meals will be targeted solely for malnourished children in Dakar. There will be 2 distribution points that will have nurse practitioners administering the meals and charting the children's progress. The 143,000 meals will feed 5,800 children 5 times a week for 5 weeks. One of the objectives is to chart the children's progress and demonstrate to both the parents and the government how important good nutrition is to the health and welfare of their children. Pastor Dogue again went on to express great gratitude, joy and appreciation to SWIFT sailors and contracted mariners as well as "Kids Against Hunger" and Project Handclasp.

4. All of the contracted mariners on SWIFT are familiar through prior merchant marine experience with the endemic poverty in West and Central Africa, however for most of the sailors onboard it was a new experience. Team SWIFT realize that trust and cooperation with our partner nations must be cultivated over time and that small examples of the U.S. Navy's commitment to community demonstrate a dedication to the Host Nation outside of military support.

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5. I encourage you to visit the CAPRO website <http://www.capromissions.org/senegalnews.html> to find out more details about the organization and to look at the before and after pictures of the children who were able to benefit from the 5 week program. SWIFT is scheduled to deliver another 58 pallets of Project Handclasp material in Ghana, Gabon, Togo, Liberia, and The Gambia. It has been a pleasure for Team SWIFT to support these very worthwhile organizations in assisting those who need it most.


J. D. TOLG

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