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## Office of Laura Bush - Press

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The Trip of the First Lady to Monrovia, Liberia Accra, Ghana Abuja, and Nigeria, 01/14/2006 - 01/18/2006 [2]

Accra, Ghana

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the First Lady  
(Accra, Ghana)

For Immediate Release

January 17, 2006

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY  
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICA EDUCATION INITIATIVE  
TEXTBOOKS PROGRAM

Accra Teacher Training College  
Accra, Ghana

8:45 A.M. (Local)

MRS. BUSH: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you very, very much for your welcome to your beautiful country. And thanks to everyone in Ghana for their very, very warm welcome.

Elizabeth Ohene, the Minister of State for Education, thank you so much for your warm welcome, as well, and for your introduction. Chief, thank you for letting us be here in your beautiful part of the country. And I also want to thank the Presidents of the American universities who have joined us today who will be working in partnership with African countries on this textbook project.

I'm especially happy to be at the Accra Teacher Training Institute. As a teacher and librarian myself, I know what a joy it is to help children learn to read and write, to become proficient in mathematics, and to develop a love of history and science. A pioneering American teacher named Christa McAuliffe famously said, "I touch the future. I teach." Each of you touches the future of your country by teaching Ghana's children.

As teachers, as parents, and as citizens, all of us have the responsibility to ensure that every child has access to education, an education that will lead to a happy and healthy life. And when we say "every child," we must mean every child, whether boy or girl, rich or poor. Educated children grow up to be adults who have more opportunities to work, to support their own families, and to fully participate in the life of their country. It's so important to educate boys and girls, because boys and girls can make important contributions to our world.

Education produces many social benefits, and perhaps none greater than better health. Education is our greatest ally in the effort to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. The United States is working with governments and private organizations throughout Africa to achieve this goal. We know from experience that educated girls and boys are more likely to know what HIV is, and how to avoid infection. Girls who are educated have more economic and social resources to rely on, and, therefore, have more power to negotiate their own sexual lives. In fact, educated young women have lower rates of HIV/AIDS, healthier families, and higher rates of education for their own children.

Sadly, too many children around the world do not have access to education or schooling. The problem is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa. More than one-third of primary school-age children are not enrolled in school at all, and of those who do enter the first grade, fewer than half will complete primary school.

In Ghana, more children are going to school today than ever before. The enrollment rate for school-age children has risen from 73 percent in 1998 to more than 86 percent in 2004. This is a very positive development. (Applause.)

Of course, there are many problems and challenges that every country still faces. Books and other learning materials are often in short supply. It's not uncommon in rural areas to see just one textbook for a whole classroom. Girls, especially girls in rural villages, are much less likely than boys to attend schools. And students who live in poverty have few opportunities for schooling because their parents cannot afford the school fees or buy uniforms or books.

The people of the United States believe in Africa's future. We know, as you do, that education is vital to a better future for all of the world's children, and we're working with you to make education available and accessible to more children in Africa.

Representatives from six American universities are here today because their schools are now partners in education with six nations in Africa. In the United States, our higher education institutions welcome students from around the world. Their campuses are filled with men and women who strive to improve life for people everywhere.

I'd like to introduce you to the university Presidents:

Dr. Elnora Daniel, the President of Chicago State University. (Applause.) Chicago State University will partner with Ghana. (Applause.)

Dr. Mickey Burnim, the President of Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina. (Applause.) Elizabeth City State University will partner with Senegal.

Dr. Beverly Hogan, President of Tougaloo College. (Applause.) Tougaloo College is part of the Mississippi Consortium, and they'll partner with Zambia.

Dr. Andrew Hugine, President of South Carolina State University. (Applause.) South Carolina State University will partner with Tanzania.

Dr. Richard Romo, President of the University of Texas at San Antonio. (Applause.) The University of Texas at San Antonio will partner with South Africa.

Dr. Mary Spor, the Program Coordinator for Reading and Literacy at Alabama A&M. (Applause.) Alabama A&M University will partner with Ethiopia.

These schools and nations will work together as partners in the Textbooks and Learning Materials Program to produce and distribute 15 million primary school textbooks for African students. (Applause.)

These textbooks will be created in Africa so they will represent the unique experiences of African students. The text will be written with African cultures at the center, and the illustrations will depict African scenes. The subjects will include reading, mathematics, science and language arts. We emphasize these subjects because it's essential that every child learns how to read, learns how to add, subtract, multiply and divide, and learns about the world around us. Teaching materials, such as flash cards, charts and teaching guides will supplement the books and will give teachers more options in their classroom work.

The Textbooks and Learning Materials Program is part of President Bush's efforts to expand access to education in Africa. His African Education Initiative is a \$600 million commitment to provide books, scholarships, school uniforms and teacher training so that more children can attend school. The

African Education Initiative includes funding to train 920,000 teachers in 20 countries in sub-Saharan African. As of December, more than 300,000 new and experienced teachers had received training.

In addition to the textbook program announced today, the African Education Initiative has already facilitated the shipment of over two million books to African schools and libraries. When I visited Tanzania and Rwanda last summer, I announced the donations of books in those countries. And today, I'm pleased to announce the donation of 25,000 books for school libraries in Ghana. (Applause.) And by the way, these are new books that are carefully selected and vetted to be appropriate for school-age children in Africa.

A major goal of President Bush's African Education Initiative is to enroll more girls in school. To meet that goal, the United States sponsors the Ambassadors Girls' Scholarship Program, which will provide 550,000 scholarships to girls at the primary and secondary school level. So far, 120,000 scholarships have been provided in 40 countries. The scholarships pay for tuition, fees, books, uniforms, and other essential supplies.

The American people support these scholarships because we believe that investing in a child's education will produce benefits many times over in the future. An educated woman is better able to provide for her family economically, and to be an advocate for her own children's education. She has the knowledge and the skills to find new ways to improve life in her community. She's prepared to be an active participant in society, and perhaps even a national leader.

Yesterday, I attended the inauguration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Liberia's new President. President Johnson-Sirleaf is the first woman to be elected President of an African nation. (Applause.) This is a historic time for Liberia, for Africa, and for women everywhere. President Johnson-Sirleaf is an example for young women around the world of a woman who has risen to the very top of her government through hard work, faith in democracy, and belief in the power of education.

Children everywhere need positive role models, and they need the love, support and advice from caring adults. Girls and boys will look to teachers in this room as role models. They'll see that you value education, and because you value education, they'll value their own education.

I hope that when you reach the classrooms where you'll teach, you and your students will benefit from the partnership with Chicago State University that we're launching today. The people of the United States stand with you as you help more students fulfill their dreams. Together, we can build a future of peace and prosperity for both of our countries.

I wish you success in your studies at Accra Teacher Training College, and great happiness in your careers that lie ahead. Thank you very, very much.

END

8:57 A.M. (Local)

The Washington Times

January 16, 2006

HEADLINE: Laura fires back at critics

BYLINE: Bill Sammon

ACCRA, Ghana -- First lady **Laura Bush** yesterday said she was "irritated" by outside criticism of her husband's anti-AIDS programs in Africa as being focused too heavily on abstinence and not enough on condoms.

**Mrs. Bush**, on a trip to West Africa to witness the inauguration of the continent's first elected female president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, also defended a National Security Agency program to eavesdrop on foreign al Qaeda suspects who communicate with Americans. She said the political furor in the U.S. would aid the terrorists.

But she was most annoyed by a question about AIDS and the U.S. policy to emphasize abstinence, which the reporter asking her said "some people have equated ... with Christian moralism."

"I'm always a little bit irritated when I hear the criticism of abstinence, because abstinence is absolutely 100 percent effective in eradicating a sexually transmitted disease," **Mrs. Bush** said, before tying her answer in with one of the major themes of her trip, women's rights in Africa.

"In a country or a part of the world where one in three people have a sexually transmitted deadly disease, you have to talk about abstinence, you really have to," she said. "In many countries where girls feel obligated to comply with the wishes of men, girls need to know that abstinence is a choice."

She also said AIDS can be curbed by the correct use of condoms and by being faithful to one's partner.

**Mrs. Bush** also said her husband was upset last month when the New York Times revealed the existence of the National Security Agency eavesdropping program.

"He was worried that it would undermine our efforts by alerting terrorists to what our efforts are," she said. "We're constantly on the alert for an attack like what happened on September 11th."

"And I think the American people expect the United States government and the president to do what they can to make sure there's not an attack by foreign terrorists," she added.

**Mrs. Bush** is leading the U.S. delegation, which also includes her daughter Barbara and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, to today's swearing-in of Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf, a U.S.-educated economist and former World Bank official.



"We're really, really excited to be at such a historic inauguration," **Mrs. Bush** told reporters en route to Africa. "Because traditionally, women have been excluded in many African cultures -- not all of them, but in many."

The first lady said Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf "serves as a very important role model for little girls on the continent, as well as around the world."

The Bush administration hopes the inauguration will mark a turning point for Liberia, which was wracked by violence that killed about 250,000 people from 1989 to 2003. Since then, a transitional government has ruled the continent's oldest republic, which was established in 1847 by freed American slaves.

**Mrs. Bush** said the new president can begin the healing process in earnest and pledged U.S. help to rebuild the war-ravaged nation.

"She ran on a platform of reconciliation and reconstruction, and it's going to take the help of a lot of countries, including the United States, which has a special relationship with Liberia, for her and the people of Liberia to be able to do the reconstruction they need," she said.

Assistant Secretary of State Jendayi Frazer, who is traveling with **Mrs. Bush**, said the U.S. is in the process of giving Liberia "\$1 billion from 2004 to 2006."

**Mrs. Bush** also will make stops in Ghana and Nigeria to discuss such topics as HIV/AIDS. Barbara, her daughter, recently worked with AIDS-stricken children in a South African hospital.

On the U.S. political front, **Mrs. Bush** also brushed off suggestions that Vice President Dick Cheney's health problems would prevent him from serving out his term. Mr. Cheney recently was hospitalized for shortness of breath, caused by a medication he was taking for a foot ailment.

"Vice President Cheney's in great health, and he's doing great," she said. "I'm sure the president would not like for him to step down, obviously."

"The vice president has been an excellent vice president," she added. "He's solid as a rock."

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

January 17, 2006

HEADLINE: U.S. First Lady **Laura Bush** visits AIDS patients in Ghana

U.S. First Lady **Laura Bush** in Ghana on Tuesday launched a school textbook programme at an Accra teacher training college and visited HIV/AIDS sufferers in the country's largest hospital.

**Mrs. Bush**, on an official visit to West Africa that on Monday saw her attend the inauguration of new Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, pledged the commitment of the United States to improving education in Africa, and particularly in Ghana.

She said every child, whether rich or poor, must be given the opportunity of education in order to enable them to contribute to the development of the country.

**Mrs. Bush** launched the Textbook and Learning Materials Programme (TLMP), which was a component of the Africa Education Initiative (AEI) announced by President George W. Bush in June 2002.

The AEI is a 600-million-dollar eight-year initiative that focuses on increasing access to quality basic educational opportunities in Africa through three main programmes: teacher training, educational scholarships for girls and development of textbooks and learning materials.

About 25,000 books are to be given to the libraries in Ghana and 300,000 teachers will receive training under the AEI programme.

Under the AEI banner, the TLMP programme meanwhile matches U.S. universities with educators in Africa to develop primary school curricula and associated materials, ultimately producing 15 million schoolbooks.

She was accompanied at the college by Ghanaian President John Agyekum Kufuor, U.S. Ambassador to Ghana Pamela Bridgewater as well as local education officials and representatives of six U.S. universities involved in the programme.

An agreement was signed Tuesday between Chicago State University, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Ghanaian ministry of education, youth and sports for the commencement of the programme in Ghana.

Also Tuesday, **Mrs. Bush** accompanied by her daughter Barbara visited the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, where she met staff and caregivers as well as HIV/AIDS patients.

HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Ghana, but it is far worse in other sub-Saharan countries like South Africa and Botswana.

But even so, UNAIDS noted that Ghana had 350,000 people living with HIV and 30,000 deaths in 2003.

Ghana's HIV infection rate has dropped for the first time in five years, and is now down countrywide to 3.1 per cent from 3.6 per cent in 2003, according to a survey released in April 2005.

**Mrs. Bush** was to leave Ghana on Tuesday afternoon for Nigeria and the final leg of her West African tour.

The Associated Press

January 17, 2006

HEADLINE: First lady highlights education, AIDS in West Africa

BYLINE: Deb Riechmann

In a muggy college auditorium, first lady **Laura Bush** on Tuesday announced a U.S.-backed program to provide 15 million textbooks for students in sub-Saharan Africa where more than one-third of primary school aged children are not enrolled in school.

"It's not uncommon in rural areas to see just one textbook for a whole classroom," **Mrs. Bush** said at Accra Teacher Training College.

"Girls, especially girls in rural villages, are much less likely than boys to attend school. And students who live in poverty have few opportunities for schooling because their parents cannot afford the school fees or buy uniforms and books."

**Mrs. Bush** was joined by representatives of six U.S. colleges and universities that are receiving USAID funds to produce and distribute textbooks in Ghana, Senegal, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa and Ethiopia. The colleges are: Chicago State University, Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina, Tougaloo College in Mississippi, South Carolina State University, the University of Texas-San Antonio and Alabama A&M University.

"These textbooks will be created in Africa so they will represent the unique experiences of African students," **Mrs. Bush** told about 500 students, all dressed navy pants or skirts, white shirts and navy ties stamped with the school emblem.

The president of Ghana, John Kufuor, wiping sweat from his brow, thanked the first lady for visiting Ghana to underscore U.S. commitment to education in Africa, especially for girls.

"Madam, we know how you feel about educating the girl child," he said. "We share this passion of yours."

The program is part of President Bush's Africa Education Initiative, a \$600 million commitment to provide books, scholarships, school uniforms and teacher training so that more children in Africa can attend school. **Mrs. Bush** said the initiative already has helped ship more than 2 million books to African schools and libraries.

Later, **Mrs. Bush** visited the Korle-Bu clinic, which treats 150 to 220 AIDS patients three times a week. She met a woman who cares for children who have lost their parents to AIDS, HIV-positive women taking antiviral drugs and children with the disease who are struggling to maintain normal lives.

"A big problem here is stigma and discrimination," Dr. Nii Addo, program director for national AIDS control in Ghana, said, adding that people still fear shaking hands with AIDS sufferers.

"It's really important to reach out to people who are HIV positive or who have AIDS and also to

reach out to people around the world who don't to get the word out and get the education out so that people can avoid ever getting AIDS," **Mrs. Bush** said. "When somebody who has AIDS speaks, then you put a real face on the disease."

Voice of America

January 17, 2006

HEADLINE: US Launches African Textbook Initiative

BYLINE: Scott Stearns

The Bush administration has joined six American universities with six African nations to develop new primary school curricula. U.S. first lady **Laura Bush** announced the plan during a visit to Ghana.

The partnership matches American universities in the states of Illinois, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Alabama with educators in Ghana, Senegal, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa and Ethiopia.

They will develop individual curricula for children between kindergarten and eighth grade, ultimately producing 15 million primary schoolbooks.

"These textbooks will be created in Africa, so they will represent the unique experiences of African students," the first lady explained. "The text will be written with African cultures at the center, and the illustrations will depict African scenes."

**Mrs. Bush** says the subjects will include reading, mathematics, science, and language arts, with additional funding to produce flash cards, charts, and teaching guides to give instructors more options for individual students.

Its part of the Bush administration's Africa Education Initiative, a \$600 million plan to provide books, scholarships, school uniforms, and teacher training.

Speaking at the Accra Teacher Training College, **Mrs. Bush** said the initiative includes funds to train 920,000 teachers in 20 Sub-Saharan countries.

It is also focused on getting more African girls in school with 550,000 primary and secondary school scholarships for tuition, fees, books, and uniforms.

"The American people support these scholarships because we believe that investing in a child's education will produce benefits many times over in the future," she said. "An educated woman is better able to provide for her family economically, and to be an advocate for her own children's education. She has the knowledge and the skills to find new ways to improve life in her community. She is prepared to be an active participant in society, and perhaps even a national leader."

**Laura Bush** attended Monday's inauguration of Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first female head of state. The first lady said the new Liberian president is an example for young women around the world as she rose to the top of her government through hard work, faith in democracy and belief in the power of education.

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: U.S. to supply Africa textbooks

BYLINE: Bill Sammon

ACCRA, Ghana -- First lady **Laura Bush** yesterday hailed six American colleges for agreeing to produce and distribute 15 million textbooks for primary-school students in poverty-stricken Africa.

"Sadly, too many children around the world do not have access to education or schooling," **Mrs. Bush** told 500 trainees at the Accra Teacher Training College. "The problem is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa."

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide funding for the program, which will send textbooks to Ghana, Senegal, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa and Ethiopia. The books will be printed in English or French, depending on each country's official language, according to a spokeswoman with USAID.

"These textbooks will be created in Africa so they will represent the experiences of African students," **Mrs. Bush** said.

While the first lady was joined onstage by college presidents in this impoverished African nation, her textbook announcement was being criticized in Washington.

"The initiative she has launched is rather narrow in scope," said David Bryden, communications director for Global AIDS Alliance. "We believe the U.S. should be thinking much bigger when it comes to supporting effective basic-education programs. We need to go beyond textbooks."

But the first lady said textbooks are just one aspect of President Bush's \$600 million African Education Initiative, which also pays for scholarships, school uniforms and teacher training. She said the program, started in 2001, is already paying dividends.

"In addition to the textbook program announced today, the African Education Initiative has already facilitated the shipment of over 2 million books to African schools and libraries," she said.

Still, in sub-Saharan Africa, at least a third of the children are not enrolled in primary school. Of those who do enroll in first grade, fewer than half actually graduate from primary school.

**Mrs. Bush** said children who are taught reading, math and science end up with fewer sexually transmitted diseases, which are rampant in Africa.

"Education is our greatest ally in the effort to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS," she said. "Educated girls and boys are more likely to know what HIV is and how to avoid infection."

The colleges and universities participating in the program are Chicago State University, Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina, Tougaloo College in Mississippi, South

Carolina State University, the University of Texas at San Antonio and Alabama A&M University.

Mr. Bryden acknowledged that **Mrs. Bush** "is correct that education is one of our most effective weapons in the fight against AIDS." But he called on Mr. Bush, who has pledged \$5 billion to fight AIDS, to do even more.

"We see a key opportunity over the next two weeks, as President Bush is preparing his State of the Union address," he said. "We, along with a wide range of other groups, have appealed to him to announce a new presidential initiative on expanding access to basic education."

After delivering her speech, **Mrs. Bush** visited the AIDS ward of a clinic in Accra. She and her daughter Barbara met with 16 AIDS patients to discuss ways to fight the disease and cope with the stigmatization of victims.

The first lady later flew to Nigeria, where she will visit a school and hospital today.



**Abuja, Nigeria**

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the First Lady  
(Gwagwalada, Nigeria)

Immediate Release

January 18, 2006

For

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY  
AT A VISIT TO ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL

Gwagwalada, Nigeria

9:20 A.M. (Local)

MRS. BUSH: I'm so happy to be here today with Sister Elizabeth and everyone here at St. Mary's to announce the shipment of the antiretrovirals and drugs that are behind me that are the first part of a shipment of antiretroviral drugs to St. Mary's Hospital. The United States -- PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief -- has had a relationship with St. Mary's Hospital for a while. We started out by funding the mother-to-child transmission -- or the stopping of the mother-to-child transmission of HIV. And then our support has grown, as St. Mary's has grown.

So today, what's behind me will be the first of a shipment for antiretroviral treatment for 500 people. Already in Nigeria, about 29,000 people have been treated with funds from PEPFAR. Behind you, in a little bit, we'll inaugurate the opening of St. Mary's new laboratory because comprehensive drug treatment with antiretrovirals requires laboratory tests to make sure people are really receiving the treatment they need. And the United States, through PEPFAR, is proud to have been able to help St. Mary's by buying some of the laboratory equipment that will be in this new lab.

I met earlier this morning with President Obasanjo who stood with President Bush and Kofi Annan in the Rose Garden in Washington, D.C., as they announced the Global Fund for AIDS. He has been a partner all along in trying to get treatment to as many people as possible in Nigeria to stop the spread of AIDS and to treat people so people can live a normal life with AIDS.

I also want to announce today -- and this is new -- that the United States will commit \$163 million this year to Nigeria

to treat AIDS, treat people with AIDS, to try to prevent the spread of AIDS and to make HIV/AIDS treatment possible for many more people here in Nigeria.

So it's my honor to get to be here today with you. Thank you for your very, very good work.

END

9:22 A.M. (Local)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the First Lady  
(Abuja, Nigeria)

For Immediate Release

January 18, 2006

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY  
AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN DEVELOPMENT

Abuja, Nigeria

2:20 P.M. (Local)

MRS. BUSH: Thank you very much. And thanks to everyone who is here today. I want to thank Mrs. Ciroma, Minister of Women's Affairs. Thank you for your very kind introduction. I want to thank everyone in Nigeria for their very, very warm welcome. I want to acknowledge the Minister of Education Madam Obaji for accompanying me today. She accompanied me everywhere we went. Thank you very much for joining me today. The Minister of Finance, who joined me at the roundtable today, and educated me a lot about what women can do in this role of finance, thank you very much for joining me today. And the Minister of Health, thank you very much for being here.

I also want to thank everyone else here who is a member of the government of Nigeria and all of you here who work with NGOs in Nigeria to make sure the men and women of Nigeria have a chance to develop healthy and successful lives.

Also today are representatives from UNESCO. I'm honored to serve as the Honorary Ambassador of the United Nations Decade for Literacy. The United States shares the goal of UNESCO to advance education for all. It should be our expectation that every child -- boy and girl, rich and poor -- has access to education.

I also want to thank the United States Ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell. Thank you very, very much for welcoming me here to your post.

I had a very interesting and informative discussion with some of Nigeria's women leaders today. Thank you very much to the Honorable Sani, Chair of the House of Representatives'

Committee on Women's Affairs. Thank you for moderating our roundtable.

It's fitting that we meet here in this place. Esther Mangzha, the Director of the National Center for Women's Development, does wonderful work documenting the contributions Nigerian women have made and are still making to the development of their nation and the world.

The women I met today represent different parts of Nigerian society. Some serve in government. Others work for NGOs and international organizations. They all share the same goal, though, which is to give all women in Nigeria the opportunity to contribute to the life of their country.

The people of the United States share your goal, and the women of the United States know your struggle. It was only in the last century, 150 years after our Declaration of Independence, that women attained the vote in the United States. Young girls need role models whose lives are examples of achievement, and today I met some of the role models for Nigeria's girls.

It's increasingly common for African women to be leaders in their government. On Monday, the world witnessed the inauguration of Liberia's President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. (Applause.) President Johnson-Sirleaf is the first woman to be elected the leader of an African nation. This is a historic time -- for Liberia, for Africa, and for women everywhere. President Johnson-Sirleaf is an example for young women around the world of a woman who has risen to the top of her government through hard work, faith in democracy, and a belief in the power of education.

The question we must answer now is how do we nurture the development of the next generation of women leaders in Africa and worldwide. The answer begins with education. Education is the foundation of a happy and healthy life. Educated children grow up to be adults who have more opportunities to work, to support their families, and to fully participate in the life of their communities. It's so important to educate boys and girls, because boys and girls can make important contributions to our world.

Sadly, too many children around the world do not have access to education. The problem is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa. More than one-third of primary school-age children are

not enrolled in school at all. Of those who do enter the first grade, fewer than half will complete primary school. Books and other learning materials are often in short supply. It's not uncommon in rural areas to have just one copy of a textbook for a whole classroom. Girls, especially girls in rural villages, are much less likely than boys to attend school, and students who live in poverty have few opportunities for schooling because their parents do not have the money to pay their school fees or buy their uniforms and books.

The people of the United States believe in Africa's future. We know, as you do, that education is vital to a better future for all of the world's children, and we're working with you to make education available and accessible to more children in Africa.

Education in Africa is a priority for President Bush. His Africa Education Initiative is a \$600 million commitment to provide books, scholarships, school uniforms and teacher training so that more children can attend school. The Africa Education Initiative includes funding to train 920,000 teachers in 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. As of December, more than 300,000 new and experienced teachers had received training. The Initiative has also facilitated the shipment of over two million books to African schools and libraries.

A major goal of President Bush's Africa Education Initiative is to enroll more girls in school. To meet that goal, the United States sponsors the Ambassadors Girls' Scholarship Program, which will provide 550,000 scholarships to girls at the primary and secondary level. So far, 120,000 scholarships have been provided in 40 countries. The scholarships pay for tuition, fees, books, uniforms, and other essential supplies.

This morning, I met a student named Glory, in the ninth grade at the Model Secondary School in Abuja. Glory's parents work hard, but they have difficulty paying for schooling for her and her siblings. Thanks to the Ambassadors Girls' Scholarship Program, Glory is able to stay in school and work with mentors who help her stay on the path to achieving her dreams.

I saw Glory at her school today, and she told me that her dream is to become a doctor so that she can help find a cure for diseases like HIV/AIDS. I'm encouraged by the hopes and dreams of young people. All children should have great dreams, and they should believe in a future where every dream is possible.

The people of the United States are pleased to work with schools in Nigeria to make education a reality for thousands of students. We support these scholarships, because we believe that investing in a child's education will produce benefits many times over in the future.

An educated woman is better able to provide for her family economically, and to be an advocate for her own children's education. She has the knowledge and the skills to find new ways to improve life in her community. She's prepared to be an active participant in society, and perhaps even a national leader.

Education produces many social benefits, and perhaps none greater than better health. The United States is working with governments and private organizations through Africa to prevent HIV/AIDS, and to provide treatment and care to those who are already infected by the disease. We all know that education is our greatest ally. Educated girls and boys are more likely to know what HIV is and how to prevent infection. Girls who are educated have more economic and social resources to rely on, and therefore can avoid early marriage and have more of a chance to negotiate their own sexual lives. In fact, educated young women have lower rates of HIV/AIDS, healthier families, and higher rates of education for their own children.

Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the people of the United States are supporting treatment for more than 400,000 men, women and children in 15 focus countries, including 29,000 people in Nigeria. Our partnership with Nigeria has been vital to achieving this early success. The United States has a dedicated partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS in President Obasanjo. Long before experts thought it was possible, President Obasanjo believed treatment was possible in Africa and launched a treatment program in Nigeria. He champions antiretroviral treatments, not just for the people of Nigeria, but for all Africans, and he stood with President Bush and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan at the White House in the Rose Garden for the announcement of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

In 2004, the United States provided Nigeria with almost \$71 million through the PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan, to prevent, treat and manage the effects of HIV/AIDS. In 2005, we provided more than \$110 million, and I'm pleased to announce that in 2006, the United States is providing more than \$163 million to overcome HIV/AIDS in Nigeria. (Applause.)

Resources from the United States support organizations that are already here on the ground, founded by Nigerians -- faith-based and other humanitarian groups that have long established relationships with the people in Nigeria. Earlier today, I visited one of those places -- St. Mary's Hospital. St. Mary's first partnered with the United States to provide treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Advances in drug therapies make it possible for women who are HIV-positive to give birth to babies who are free from the disease.

In South Africa last summer, I met several mothers who successfully prevented transmission of HIV to their children, and we're all hopeful that soon an entire generation will be born free from HIV. (Applause.)

This morning, antiretroviral drugs paid for by the people of the United States through PEPFAR were delivered to St. Mary's. These drugs will be used to treat more than 500 patients living with HIV/AIDS. I also saw the new laboratory at St. Mary's, which will allow the staff to perform the tests that are necessary to support the lifesaving antiretroviral treatment.

The United States is proud to work with the people of Nigeria on many important issues. We will continue to work together to help the next generation reach its full potential. When we provide education, better health care, and growing opportunities for women, every boy and every girl will know that they can be a part of Nigeria's bright future.

I'm much inspired by the warmth and the energy of the people I've met in Nigeria today. Thank you for your generous hospitality, thank you for your warm welcome, and may God bless the people of Nigeria. Thank you all very much. (Applause.)

END

2:33 P.M. (Local)



UPI

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: U.S. first lady talks education in Africa

U.S. first lady **Laura Bush** concluded her trip to Africa Wednesday by meeting with a Nigerian women's group and talked of role models and education.

Bush was part of the U.S. delegation at the inauguration Monday of Liberia President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, whom Bush called "an example for young women around the world."

"The question we must answer now is how do we nurture the development of the next generation of women leaders in Africa and worldwide," Bush said. "The answer begins with education. ... Educated children grow up to be adults who have more opportunities to work, to support their families, and to fully participate in the life of their communities."

After leaving Nigeria, Bush was asked about comments Monday by Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., who claimed Republicans were running the U.S. House of Representatives "like a plantation."

"I think it's ridiculous, it's a ridiculous comment. That's what I think," the first lady said.

She also said her next travel from Washington would likely include a trip to the hurricane-damaged U.S. Gulf Coast to visit schools that have recently reopened.

NBC News Transcripts- Today

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: First lady **Laura Bush** visits Nigeria, pledges aid

ANCHORS: ANN CURRY

ANN CURRY, anchor:

In Africa, first lady **Laura Bush** announced that the US will provide \$163 million in assistance to fight AIDS in Nigeria. **Mrs. Bush** met with Nigeria's president and visited AIDS patients and health workers at a small clinic.

BBC Monitoring Africa – Political

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: Visiting **Laura Bush** donates AIDS drugs to Nigerian hospital

Text of report by Radio Nigeria from Abuja on 18 January

The US first lady and wife of President George Bush, Mrs **Laura Bush**, has donated antiretroviral drugs worth 2m dollars to the St Mary's Catholic Hospital, Gwagwalada, Abuja.

She made the donation today when she visited the hospital as part of her visit to Nigeria.

The drug is to be used in the management of the HIV/AIDS cases in the hospital [words indistinct].

Source: Radio Nigeria-Abuja in English

Reuters- Associated Press

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: Universities to help develop Africa school texts

BYLINE: Patricia Wilson

Six U.S. universities will apply their academic weight to help create school textbooks for Africa, U.S. first lady **Laura Bush** said on Tuesday as she announced an education aid partnership for the continent.

Visiting a teacher training college in Ghana during an African tour, Bush announced that the American universities would collaborate with six African counterparts to develop primary school textbooks that would reflect African reality.

"These textbooks will be created in Africa so they will represent the experiences of African students," Bush said as she visited the college in Accra with Ghana's president, John Kufuor. "The text will be written with African cultures at the center and they will depict African scenes," said the U.S. first lady, a former elementary school teacher and librarian who has made improving education around the world one of her priorities.

Africa is the world's poorest continent and literacy rates in many of its countries are among the lowest on the planet. Many rural African schools lack even the most basic materials and because of widespread poverty, attendance is often low.

The joint development of the school texts, which will cover mathematics, reading, science and language arts, is part of a \$600 million Africa Education Initiative launched by U.S. President George W. Bush.

The program will bring together U.S. universities in Illinois, South Carolina, Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas and Alabama with African universities in Ghana, Senegal, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa and Ethiopia.

**Laura Bush**, who on Monday attended the inauguration in Monrovia of Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first elected female head of state, also announced a donation of 25,000 books for school libraries in Ghana.

Bush and her 24-year-old daughter Barbara, who worked at a pediatric AIDS clinic in South Africa last year, also visited an AIDS treatment center in Accra where they listened to moving stories from patients that included adults, children and a baby.

When one HIV positive woman described how her family had isolated her in a separate room and another talked of her "two lives" -- one before she was diagnosed and another after -- Bush thanked them for speaking out.

"You put a real face on the disease," she said.

She visits Nigeria on Wednesday.

Associated Press

January 18, 2006

HEADLINE: **Mrs. Bush** announces \$163 million in AIDS funds for Nigeria

BYLINE: Deb Riechmann

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) First lady **Laura Bush** announced Wednesday that Nigeria will receive \$163 million in U.S. assistance to fight AIDS as she heard a young woman at a small AIDS clinic tell how medications helped her avoid death from the disease.

**Mrs. Bush**, standing next to four cartons of anti-retroviral drugs, visited with health workers and AIDS patients at St. Mary's Hospital on the dusty outskirts of the capital. The four boxes enough to treat 500 people is the first U.S.-backed shipment of the drugs St. Mary's has received through President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

**Mrs. Bush** sat under shade tree to hear the stories of clinic workers and patients, including Toyin Yomi, 26, whose frail body was clad in a colorful navy dress and shawl. She tested positive for HIV in 1999 and started her first round of drug treatment in 2003.

**Mrs. Bush** nodded as the woman, who spoke in a near whisper, told her tragic, yet uplifting story. When stocks of the drug Yomi was taking were depleted, she nearly died three times. Yomi, who has been hospitalized a number of times, started a second round of drugs in April 2004 and is back on her feet.

"It's really important for people who are HIV positive to reach out to let other people know that they can be tested, they can find out they can still live a life a positive life, a happy life," **Mrs. Bush** said. "That's the message we need to get out around the world."

An estimated 3.6 million Nigerians are infected with HIV, according to the State Department. About 310,000 people die each year in Nigeria, which has one-fifth of Africa's population. Nigeria is one of the largest recipients of funds from PEPFAR, but there is serious concern that testing, monitoring and health care systems are not adequate to reach people at high risk of contracting the disease. People in their teens and 20s account for most HIV infections.

On the final day of her four-day swing through West Africa, **Mrs. Bush** met with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo at his residence, and visited a public school where young people, dressed to represent different ethnic groups in the nation, performed a welcome dance for her in a courtyard.

Walking past a sign that said "Remember that the girl child has a right to basic education," **Mrs. Bush** spoke with students who receive U.S.-backed scholarships that help pay for school fees, uniforms and supplies so they can attend school.

Her daughter, Barbara, at her side, **Mrs. Bush** advised the students, including one who said she dreamed of being a lawyer, to read many different types of books to prepare themselves for future education.

Before heading back to Washington, **Mrs. Bush** spoke at the National Center for Women's Development, the same place where President Clinton spoke about fighting AIDS in 2000.