



**Auto-Disable Syringe Factory ■ Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Commissioning Ceremony
27 October 2008**

**Remarks of Major General Roger R. Blunt (AUS, Ret.), P.E.
Chairman, Pan African Health Foundation USA**

The Right Honorable Rotimi Amaechi, Executive Governor of Rivers State:

Speaker of the Nigeria House of Representatives, the Right Honorable Dimeji Bankole:

Chief Phillip Cheido Asiodu, Chairman of PAHF Nigeria and his fellow board members:

Chief Paul S. Achimugu:

Mr. Yuichi Ishimaru, founder of the Pan African Health Foundations, today representing PAHF UK:

Dr. Sampson T. Parker, Rivers State's Commissioner for Health:

Mr. Amenya Wokoma, Executive Secretary of PAHF Nigeria:

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Pan African Health Foundations, it is a great honor and wonderful pleasure to welcome you here today.

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It has been nearly four years in our struggle to build this safe syringe factory. At times, this struggle seemed almost impossible. But we refused to give up, because the factory was not about us: it was about the people of Nigeria.

We understood that syringe re-use transmits blood-borne diseases each year in the developing world, leading to a combined total of more than 25 million new infections of HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and other diseases. This factory alone will produce 160 million safe syringes each year. These syringes will play a major role in improving the quality of health for the people of Nigeria in general -- and specifically, the men, women and children of Rivers State.

We were determined to succeed. Our success was made possible by our faith in God Almighty and by the leadership provided by the Governor of Rivers State, who recognized the years of hard work that had been spent on this project and refused to let the project die. Simply stated, the Governor has been an inspiration to all of us.

Finally, let me say that this project is not about the Pan African Health Foundation, it is about the people of Rivers State. We are reminded this morning of the words of the late President John F. Kennedy: "Here on earth, God's work must truly be our own." Barack Obama has said it all: "YES, WE CAN!" And I say for all of us: We did it!

Thank you.

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