U.S. EMBASSY
NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA
DEDICATION FACT SHEET
OCTOBER 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The new Embassy compound is situated on a 10.5-acre site in the Tevrigh Zeina district and includes a chancery, support buildings and facilities for the embassy community.

- The new Embassy compound and new buildings will provide a secure, modern, and environmentally sustainable platform for U.S diplomacy in Nouakchott.

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

- Known as the “Place of the Winds,” the capital city of Nouakchott is located on the west coast of Mauritania where the Sahara Desert meets the Atlantic Ocean. With its unique location, the city is susceptible to seasonal winds from the Harmattan – battering it with harsh Sahara sand – and winds from the Atlantic Ocean – bringing in salty and humid air.

- The design for the new Embassy draws inspiration from Islamic architecture, including Chinguetti, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in central Mauritania. More than half of the entire façade of the new Chancery features a perforated latticework copper, resembling a modern interpretation of a traditional mashrabiya – an element of Arabic architecture dating back to the Middle Ages that provides screening and shading from the harsh desert sun.

- Copper represents a natural choice as it is one of Mauritania’s leading exports and it is a proven material that can withstand Noukachott’s environmental challenges.

- A gallery space provides a place for large gatherings, events, lounge areas, and cafeteria seating.

- Visitors to the Embassy will be invited through a gateway plaza with integrated site lighting, artwork, and plantings. Walkway patterns and stones are based on local textile methods and materials.

- Construction began in June 2014 and was completed in early 2017.

- An estimated 600 workers were involved in the construction of the new Embassy.
SUSTAINABILITY

- The new Embassy design is targeting Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

- Emissions-free power is produced from a 185 kilowatt (kW) photovoltaic array, as well as a 50 kW wind turbine - the Department's first major wind-powered turbine for an American Embassy.

- The new embassy is projected to reduce energy costs by 30% through light-emitting diode (LED) site lighting; dedicated heat recovery chillers; electric traction elevators; and variable frequency drives from pumps, fans, and motors.

- Water from an on-site wastewater treatment plant will be reused to irrigate site plantings, which are carefully selected to reduce the required amount of irrigation.

ART

- The art collection includes works by contemporary artists from the United States and Mauritania.

- One theme of the exhibition is Oasis; works full of color, pattern, and texture, that are welcoming among the earth colors and bright sunlight of the desert. The concept of ‘home’ also runs through the collection, with works inspired by the architectural motifs, geographies, and materials found in both the U.S. and Mauritania.

- The collection includes objects in a variety of media, installed in the representational spaces of the Chancery.

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