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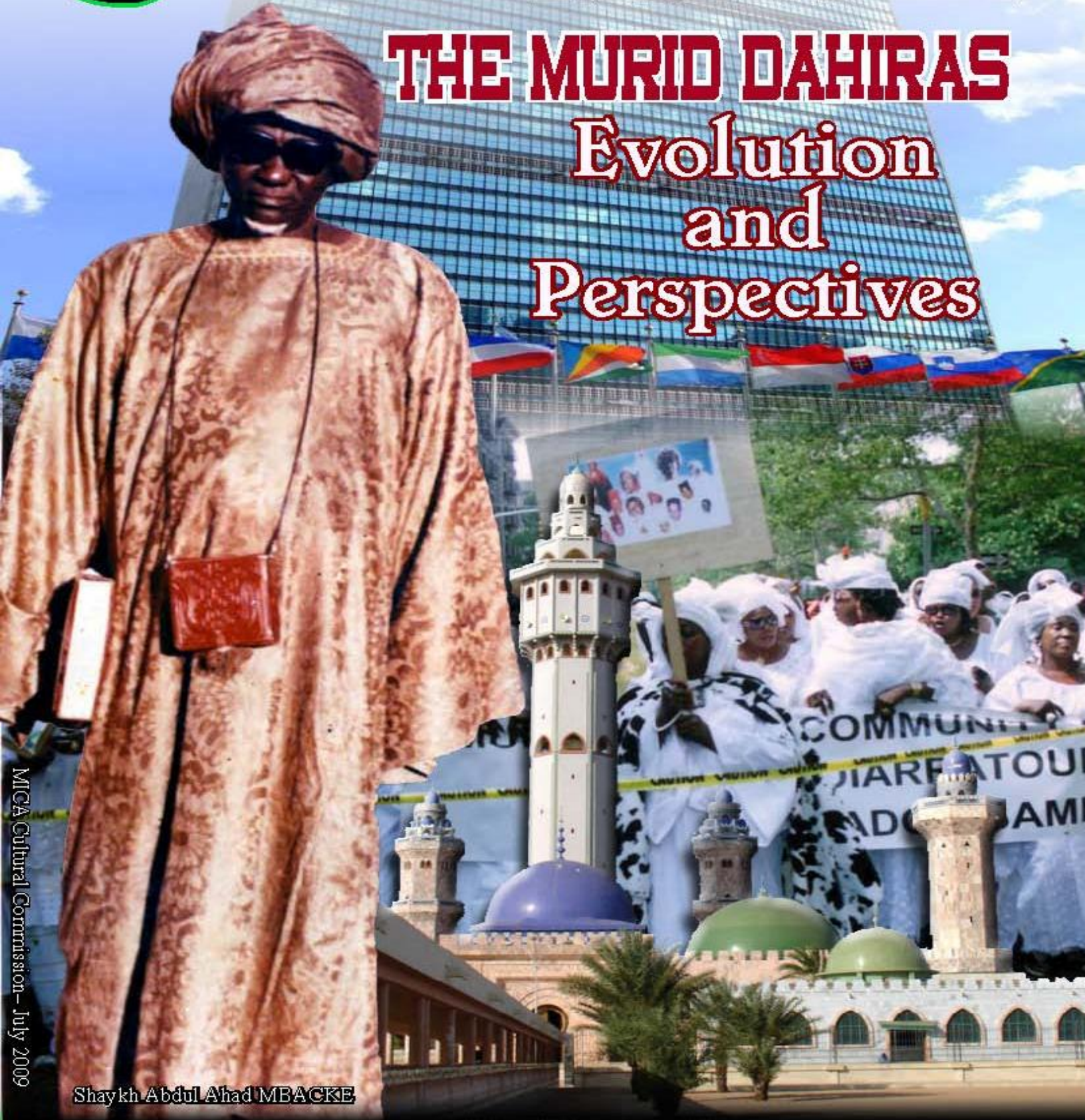
SHAYKH AHMADU BAMBA

Edition 2009



THE MURID DAHIRAS

Evolution and Perspectives



MICA Cultural Commission - July 2009

Shaykh Abdul Ahad MBACKE

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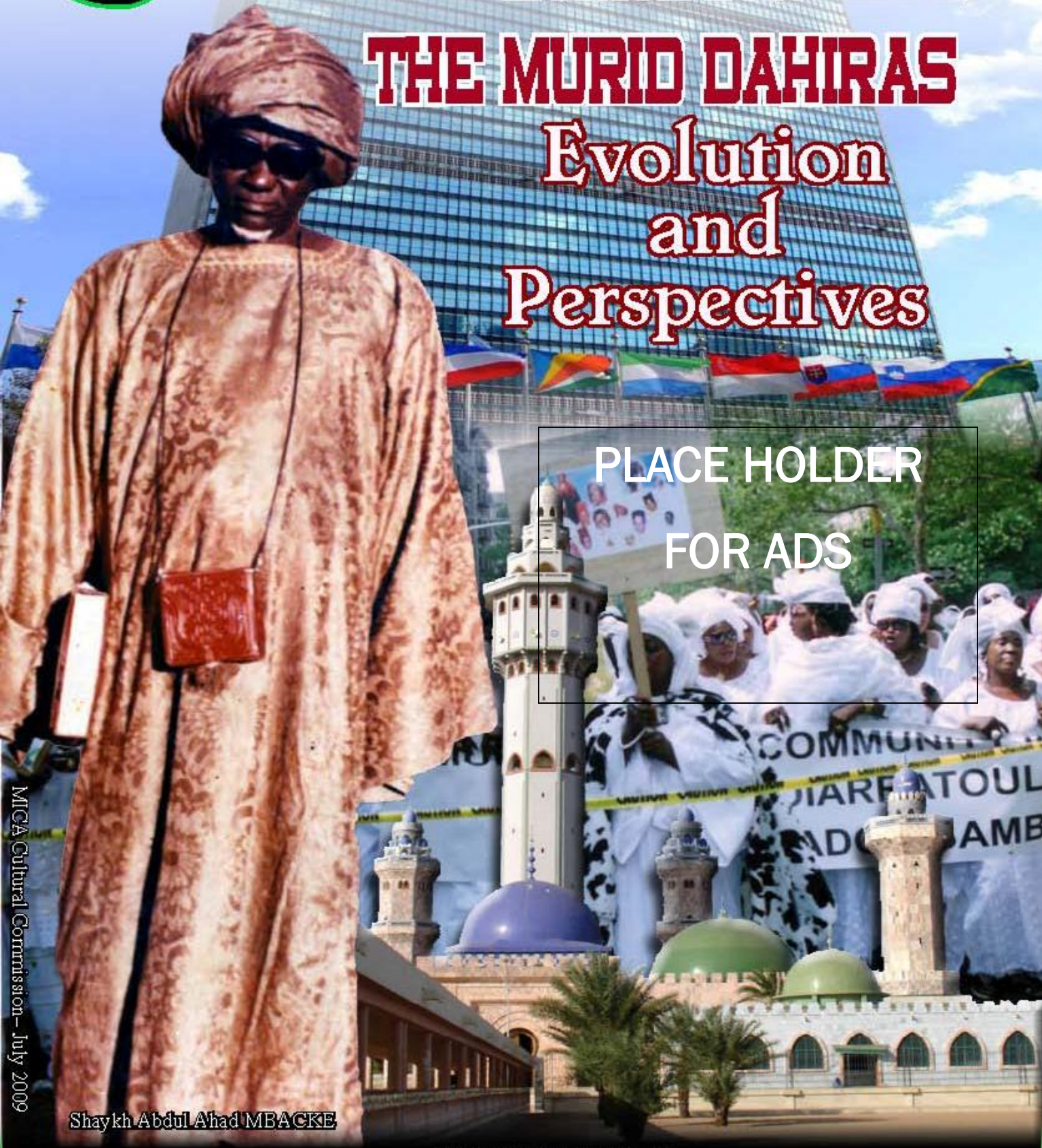
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Preface

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, Praise be to Allah!

Let all who read this document, which I have written myself, know that I take as witnesses Allah and his two scribe-angels, and declare that I have steadfastly fulfilled my pledge before Allah. Therefore I have decided to dedicate the Islamic Institute Al Azhar and its annexed centers (Buildings, vacant lots and all proceeds that they may yield) in Ndam, Kaolack, Bambey, Thies, Saint-Louis, Diourbel and elsewhere, as property of the Almighty, so that no action, which would displease the Creator, would be practiced therein.

I pray to Allah the Most High, to bless and to reward the above-mentioned works and all those who will take part in successful execution and completion.

May Allah, the sole witness of my words, grant me and all Muslims His mercy.

Sheikh Mouhammadou Mourtada Mbacke, R.A.
Touba (Senegal)

Biography of Sheikh Mouhammadou Mourtada Mbacke

Born in the early twenties in Ndam near Touba, he was raised by Sheikh Moustapha Mbacke, eldest son and first Khalife of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, who often traveled with him and made sure he completed the memorization of the Holy Qu'ran.

He founded the Al Azhar School system in the early 50's, which he did out of the yield of his own labor. This school system flourished throughout Senegal. More than twenty thousand students attend these schools.

He traveled extensively in Europe, Africa and the United States. A number of Islamic conferences took place during his annual visits in France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Johannesburg, New York, and Washington DC, where he exhorted the Islamic communities to struggle against ignorance and all forms of evils of society.

He opened Islamic centers in many cities around the world including New York, Rome, Washington DC, France, Barcelona, Johannesburg, Abidjan, etc.

Sheikh Mouhammadou Mourtada Mbacke, the youngest son of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, passed away on August 7, 2004.

May Allah reward him for the work he has completed during his lifetime in the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

All Praise are due to Allah!

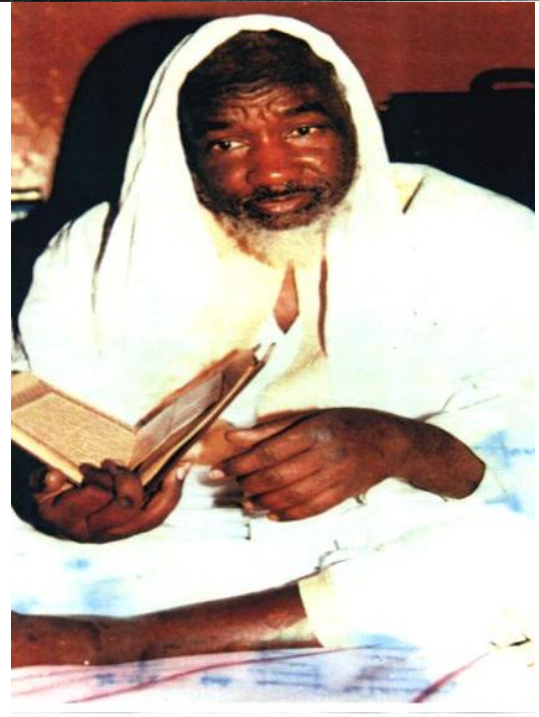
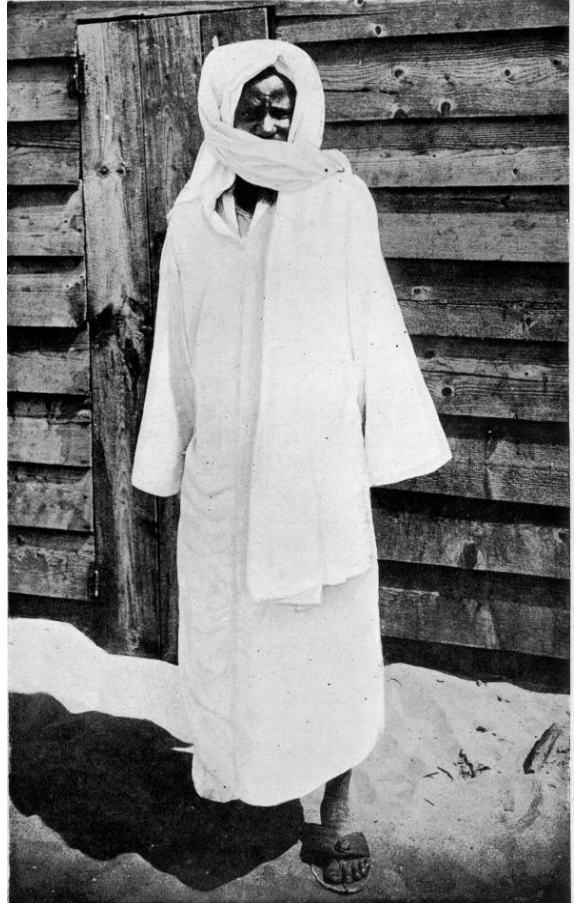
Editorial

In The Name of Allah, The beneficent, The Merciful.
 My brothers and sisters, this magazine is coming from your brothers and sisters in Islam, who are trying to give a highlight of some of the beautiful teachings of Islam, the misunderstood religion. It is imperative for Muslims to better understand the true message sent by Allah to all mankind through his messenger, The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the holy Quran and his way of life on earth. Muslims have to deliver this message through deeds and daawa in an easy, beautiful and understandable manner. Islam is misunderstood because of irresponsible actions and misleading writings done in the name of the religion. As Muslims, we must deliver the message in its originality, to the best of our ability. We think that the best way for delivering the message is by example. This was the method our spiritual leader and guide Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba had chosen. He believed that the best mean to present yourself is to show your true self in an intellectual and rational manner.

We are trying to uphold Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba's method, seizing the Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba days in Noth America to publish this magazine.

Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy and keep us in the right path.

Your brother in Islam,
 Bassirou Lo, Imam



Sheikh Abdul Ahad Mbacke, Third Caliph of the Muridiyya (1968-1989)

By Hizbut Tarqiyyah,
translated by Ahmet Sarr and Djiby Diagne

At his birth in 1914, in Diourbel, Sheikh Abdul Ahad, who would become the third Caliph of Muridiyya, Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba, his father, in the presence of his closest disciples stated: *“Pray for him so that Allah (SWT) may grant him long life, for, I have good hope in him”*. He quickly mastered the holy Quran under the supervision of his uncle Serigne Amsatou Diakhate and demonstrated a deep understanding of (Quran, Hadiths, and Religious Sciences).

We remembered him as a multi-dimensional a simple man in the gestures, authentic in his dressing style, and very jovial in his courteousness and helpfulness towards others. His speeches are still relevant in its trustfulness and guidance for the community. He indicated that no one was above the law, regardless of the family relationships, and no one could get his protection unless on the right path of Allah. He said in one of his memorable speech that a Muslim should remain steadfast with the Truth at all time. Twenty years after his disappearance, Baye Lahat, as he was respectfully called by the Murids, remains still popular and charismatic, as his illustrious father and masters had hoped.

Path to the caliphate

Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba teaches to his disciples to exclusively worship Allah (SWT), the ONE, and to practice their faith in conformity with the Sunnah. Mastering the sacred scriptures (Qur'an, Hadiths, religious sciences, etc...) is obviously an essential prerequisite according to the Sheikh, who in the same way considered making an honest living through work as a sanctifying dogma.

As a farmer, Sheikh Abdul Ahad displayed outstanding agro business management skills and demonstrated a handling of farming tools skillfully. He consistently exceeded his production goals in his farms of Touba Belel, Bokk Barga, Kadd Balooji, and Mbara Dieng and was rewarded as the top farmer in the country.

He was also a trader but never applied or collected interest, in compliance with Islamic law. His entrepreneurship spirit led him to work in transportation and logistics. Such ardor to be a hands on manager, indicates, obviously his willingness to have licit sources of income, according to



Islamic tenets.

Highlights of Abdou Ahad's Caliphate

Upon accessing the caliphate on August 6, 1968, Sheikh Abdul Ahad, unknown to most disciples set the tone of his leadership. He declared to his contemporaries, he would be their witness, in this life and in the hereafter, provided they remain steadfastly rooted to the pillars of Islam, the truth, and the service of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba; consequently, wrong-doers, using false pretences, whoever they can be would not find an advocate in his person.



dimensional man with an array of experiences gained multiple experiences before and during his caliphate.

Sheikh Abdul Ahad, like his processor, was an educator. He reinforced the importance of knowledge seeking, and throughout his leadership, many Quranic schools or madrassa were built across the country dedicated to Islamic education and research. He stressed numerous times in his sermons that one could not understand the message of Allah through the prophet Muhammad unless educated and reminded daily of the unicity of Allah.

Sheikh Abdul Ahad is remembered as a patriot deeply rooted in his Senegalese and African value systems. He proclaimed with pride his African heritage and broke from the widely spread idea that Islam is associated with Arab. He pointed out the universality of Islam, regardless of race, wealth or social rank and reaffirmed that an African Muslim should not feel inferior to an Arab Muslim, nor a white should be seen as superior. In addition, his dressing style, commonly called “Baye Lahat” which differs from the Arab style, exemplified his eagerness to leverage traditional Muslim and African values. Murids are today proud to wear a “Baye Lahat” costume that reflects one aspect of the Murid identity.

Sheikh Abdul Ahad left us with a legacy of a builder. Under his Caliphate, Touba has grown from a rural village to a modern city. He initiated many projects such as:

- the building of highways and roads
- The renovation of the great mosque of Touba
- The increase in water supply
- The construction of new cemeteries
- The construction of the first Islamic university
- The construction of the first library for researchers
- The increase in power supply to satisfy the increasing demand

As we can see, Sheikh Abdul Ahad was a multi



The Murid Diapora and the Globalization of the Muridiyya

By Cheikh Anta Mbacke Babou, PhD.,
 Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba Day Celebration Lecture United
 Nations Headquarters,
 New York City July 28th, 2007

Introduction

Most Western and Senegalese scholars of the Muridiyya agreed on one thing: they conceived of the Murid order as a parochial and conservative rural organization strongly influenced by Wolof culture. They share the opinion

popularized by the influential French colonial writer and Islamicist, Paul Marty, who claimed that the Muridiyya was nothing but Wolofization of Islam. Like Marty, these scholars believed that the Murid order was doomed to fade in oblivion because of its inability to adapt to the transformations ushered in by modernization. They predicted that the combined effects of urbanization, Western education, and the increasing penetration of capitalist relations of productions in Senegal will ineluctably lead to a progressive weakening and decline of the Murid organization.

Today, over half a century after these predictions were made, the Muridiyya has become the most powerful religious organization in Senegal. Murid disciples are estimated in the millions and they are found in the five continents. The religious celebration or maggal which commemorates the departure of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba to exile in 1895 regroups over a million Murid disciples in the holy city of Tuubaa every year, and is one the largest religious gatherings in the world. History has clearly proven Marty and the people he inspired wrong.

But the ability of the Muridiyya to maintain cohesion and continuity across space and time is unusual for this type of organization. The history and contemporary development of the Muridiyya raises the question of how an organization founded on the values of communality, religious spirituality and solidarity, mostly associated with 'traditional ways of life,' was able to adapt and even prosper in the modern era, shaped by individualism, rationalism and secularity. Murid resilience is even more intriguing since the structural factors that Western scholars believed to have contributed to the emergence of the *tariqa* (colonization, peanut cultivation) were no longer operative during the order's expansion in more recent times.

Dahira is an urban religious institution that functioned as a sort of prayer circle, where disciples living in a same town or neighborhood would meet on a weekly basis to read the Qur'an, chant Amadu Bamba's religious odes, and socialize

contend that the Murid Diapora played the critical role in the continuing relevance and expansion of the Muridiyya in Senegal, Africa, and throughout the world. In the following pages I will try to reconstruct the history of this Diaspora and the multifold contribution it made to the historical and contemporary development of the Muridiyya. But in order to better understand the role of the Murid Diaspora, we need

to know something about the role that Diaspora played in the history of Islam in general and the history of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular. Thus, the presentation will be articulated around four main sections.

Islam out of the Arabian Peninsula. Today when we talk about the spread of Islam, people tend to emphasize the impact of jihad of the sword. In reality, wars of conquest played a rather small role in the expansion of Islam

scholars believed that the Murid order was doomed to fade in oblivion because of its inability to adapt to the transformations ushered in by modernization. They predicted that the combined effects of urbanization, Western education, and the increasing penetration of capitalist relations of productions in Senegal will ineluctably lead to a progressive weakening and decline of the Murid organization. Today, over half a century after these predictions were made, the Muridiyya has become the most powerful religious organization in Senegal.

The first section is entitled: Diaspora and its Role in the History of Islam; the second section looks at the Diasporic dimension of the early Murid community; Section three analyzes the birth and expansion of the contemporary Murid Diaspora, and the last section reflects on the impact of the Diaspora on the evolution of the Muridiyya.

I-Diaspora and its Role in the History of Islam

The religion of Islam was revealed to a people of nomadic Bedouins and traders. Mecca, the holiest city of Islam and birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad, was a hub of long distance trade between the people of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. Mobility was therefore a major feature of Arab society, and particularly of the people of Mecca and Medina where Islam originated from. Prophet Muhammad's father, Abdallah was a long distance trader. The Prophet's uncles were also involved in long distance trading, and the Prophet himself traveled widely, assisting family members and working as a caravan driver of his first wife Khadija. The importance of mobility in Muslim tradition is evidenced by the special provisions made in the *sharia* or Islamic law for the traveler and stranger. The traveler or *Musaafir* is allowed to shorten prayers, to delay fasting, to marry in special circumstances and to receive special alms.

worldwide. In sub-Saharan Africa, where Islam arrived in the 10th century or a century earlier, Islam was brought by Berbers and Arab traders, teachers, and holy men. Later on, a local Jula, Jakhanke, and Fulbe Muslim Diaspora spread the new religion across the forests and Savannahs of Africa. The most populous Muslim nation of our time, Indonesia, was brought to Islam by a Diaspora of Muslim traders and holy men from Arabia, and the Indian sub-continent. As we can see, a large majority of the over one billion Muslims in the world embraced Islam as a result of peaceful missionary work by Muslim travelers and strangers who settled among them. It is possible to draw parallels between the ways in which Islam expanded throughout the world and the strategy used by Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba, the founder of the Muridiyya, to spread the organization he founded.

II-The Diasporic dimension of the Early Murid Community

Early beginnings

The early expansion of the Muridiyya in late 19th century Senegal was the result of a strategy developed by Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba and his first companions. Murid settlers and migrants played a central role in this strategy. It was in

Many among these newly consecrated sheikhs returned to their provinces of origin, founded their own villages, and started to proselytize. The only thing they requested from the rulers was enough land to build a house, a mosque, a school, and to farm; and the necessary security to carry out their activities. These Murid sheikhs were not rich and some of them originated from very modest families. The only wealth they had at the time was the education, discipline, and determination that Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba instilled in them. Just like the Murid international Diaspora of today, most of them confronted hostility and had to overcome many hurdles.

The *funduqor* hostel, the *Zawiya* or Sufi lodge, and the mosque, figure prominently in history as places designed to accommodate the lone traveler. To show generosity to the traveler and stranger is considered one of the good deeds that God appreciate the most.

Muslim Diaspora played a crucial role in the expansion of

Daaru Salaam in around 1887-1888 where the Sheikh started to commission and dispatch Sheikhs throughout Senegal. We learn from Murid oral traditions, that Sheikh Anta Mbakke, Sheikh Ibrahim Faall, Sheikh Ibra Sarr, Sheikh Adama Gueye, to name a few, were among the first Murid disciples to receive the order to separate from the Sheikh and to

form their own communities. Each of these sheikhs had been following Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba for many years. Sheikh Ibra Faal, the last to join him among this group, had been with him for four to five years. For the Sheikh, these disciples had the skills and capacity to propagate his message.

Each of these sheikhs had gone through the stages of ta'alim, tarbiyya and tarqiyya, which constitute the backbone of Murid education. Their proximity with Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba had allowed them to learn from his teachings and everyday practices, and have equipped them with the best qualities to become a leader of the Muslim and Murid communities of their time. Their soul and body have been 'remade' (*defar*) as the Murids would say.

Many among these newly consecrated sheikhs returned to their provinces of origin, founded their own villages, and started to proselytize. The only thing they requested from the rulers was enough land to build a house, a mosque, a school, and to farm; and the necessary security to carry out their activities. These Murid sheikhs were not rich and some of them originated from very modest families. The only wealth they had at the time was the education, discipline, and determination that Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba instilled in them. Just like the Murid international Diaspora of today, most of them confronted hostility and had to overcome many hurdles. We learn from colonial sources that the French administrators and their African appointees in Kajoor and Bawol reacted brutally to the settlement of Murid Sheikhs in these areas in the late 19th century. The reports cite instances where Murid sheikhs were accused of invading French territory, inciting revolts and exploiting the gullible rural folks. Murid sheikhs such as Sheikh Ibra Saar, Sheikh Maruba Gueye, were expelled from Njambur and their belongings confiscated; Murid village chiefs were fired. Sheikh Modu Jaw Fakha, and Maam Cerno Birahim Mbakke and many others faced French opposition for the settlement of their disciples in Kajoor.

The Diourbel Era

The second phase of Murid expansion in Kajoor and Bawol could be dated from 1913, when Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba was kept in house arrest in the town of Diourbel. Soon after he founded the neighborhood of Al-Mubarak in the outskirts of Diourbel, the Sheikh commissioned his disciple Mbaye Jakhate, son of the famous *qadi* (Muslim judge) of Kajoor, Majakhate Kala, to revive the village of Khuru Mbakke, his birthplace. Jakhate moved to the village where



he opened a Qur'anic school. Khuru Mbakke also became the burial ground of choice for Sheikh Amadu Bamba. After the re-habilitation of Khuru Mbakke, Amsatu Jakhate, another renowned Murid sheikh, went to Tuba where Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba instructed him to open a school. Sheikh Madumbe Mbakke, a cousin and disciple of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba, founded the village of Saam, twenty kilometers from Diourbel. Maam Cerno Ibra Faty founded the village of Daar Muhti on the border of Kajoor and Bawol in 1912.

These initiatives set off a wave of migration that sent Murid sheikhs and disciples to eastern Bawol. By 1926, colonial administrators reported that 'the Murids had conquered the whole province of Bawol'. Later on, Murid migration expanded to east central and eastern Senegal and took a new form under the guidance of Sheikhs who engaged in farming. Sheikh Muhammad Mustafa, Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba's elder son and successor, led the effort by founding a number of new villages in the ancient province of Laa in the eastern region of the former pre-colonial kingdom of Bawol. The mission of these Sheikhs was to expand the abode of Daar al-Islam or house of Islam in French dominated Senegal and to educate the people in the ways of the Muridiyya. In other works I have shown how Murid Sheikhs used Islamic geometry and sacred architecture to transform the space where they settled. We can say then that despite the hostility of the African chiefs and their French masters, Murid Sheikhs were highly successful in implanting the Muridiyya in Senegal. Maam Cerno, for example, founded many villages and consecrated dozens of Sheikhs; Sheikh Anta and Sheikh

they have brought their strong sense of solidarity and community. But what was most astonishing was how Murids have contributed to the transformation of the Harlem I knew in my childhood.

Ahmad Ndumbe created many villages in Bawol and Kajoor and trained a number of sheikhs. The same can be said about all of the early disciples of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba. The success of these sheikhs rested mostly on the positive values they displayed and the exemplary life they offered to the people. The contemporary Murid Diaspora is trying to follow in their footsteps taking the Murid ethic, the name of Serigne Tuubaa and his *khassayids* wherever they live in the world.

III-The Birth and Expansion of the Contemporary Murid Diaspora

Expansion in Senegal and Africa

As I discussed earlier, the Murids have always shown propensity to mobility. But the aftermath of WWII was marked by an intensification of this tendency. And this period can be conceived as the beginning of the contemporary Murid Diaspora. The 1970s witnessed an acceleration of Murid settlement in the cities of Senegal and Africa, particularly in Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon and Congo. The *dahira* was one of the principal tools that helped the establishment of a Murid Diaspora in the Cities of Senegal and Africa. *Dahira* is an urban religious institution that functioned as a sort of prayer circle, where disciples living in a same town or neighborhood would meet on a weekly basis to read the Qur'an, chant Amadu Bamba's religious odes, and socialize

In the urban context, the *dahira* helped develop, preserve, and reproduce the values that shaped Murid identity. These values are faith; trust in Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba, hard-work and self-reliance. The dahira also fostered links of solidarity and provided new emigrants a familiar and supportive environment. The *dahira* assisted in the organization of religious and social ceremonies, such as pilgrimages, marriages and baptisms, and helped repatriate and bury the dead in the cemetery of the holy city of Tuubaa or other Murid burial sites.

The Murid Diaspora in Europe and North America

When the Murids started to move out of Africa in the 1960s they took with them the education and social values they developed in their heartland of Senegal. In France, where they first settled, they formed linkages between members of the Diasporic community, the city of Tuubaa, and the Murid leadership in Senegal. They also celebrated the different maggal that marked the religious life of the Murid

community and traveled back and forth to perform *ziyars* or pious visits to their religious guides and pilgrimages to Murid holy sites. It is perhaps more accurate to call these disciples sojourners rather than Diaspora because they straddle many boundaries and continue to maintain strong bonds with their community of origins in Senegal.

But in Europe and North America the Murids were not oblivious to the local cultural environment. They remained profoundly attached to the positive values of the Muridiyya, but they also showed a great capacity of adaptation. They absorbed some aspects of the local cultures that suited their economic enterprise and they even incorporated modern organizational methods and techniques to disseminate the teachings of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba and strengthen the Muridiyya.

Disciples in the Diaspora played a significant role in the founding and expansion of new types of religious organizations. These are the international dahiras, NGOs and foundations such as the Khadim-ur-Rassul Foundation, MICA, Hizbut Tarqiyya, Matlabul Fawzayni and the all-women dahira Maam Jaara Busso, named after Sheikh A. Bamba's blessed mother. These dahiras adopted modern form of management with board of trustees that included disciples around the world and developed efficacious fundraising strategies. The role of these dahiras and organizations was particularly important with regard to education and the modernization of the city of Tuubaa. In the following section I address more specifically their contributions in the development of the Muridiyya.

IV-The Impact of the Diaspora on the Evolution of the Muridiyya

The Murids of today, like those of yesterday, understand that the message of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba is fundamentally universal. It is not bounded by geographical, administrative or cultural frontiers. This understanding is rooted in the Sheikh's own words: in *Jazbul Khuloob* [The attraction of the Hearts] he wrote "O Ye! Dwellers of the Oceans, O Ye! Dwellers of the earth, rush towards the ocean, the ocean of generosity." Last week, our brother Muhammad Balozzi was recounting a conversion that he had with the late Sheikh Murtalla Mbakke, youngest son of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba, some years ago at his home in New Jersey. Sheikh Murtalla reminded him of sayings of his father which are relevant to our discussion of today. Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba said that time was coming in the future when the majority of his followers will not be from the Wolof ethnic group or from Senegal. It seems that the Murid Diaspora has taken as its mission to translate this prophecy into reality. The Murid Diaspora has a profound and multidimensional impact on the evolution of the Muridiyya. Here, I will only retain three aspects: the spiritual and educational, the cultural, and the economic.

The Spiritual and Educational aspect

Unquestionably, Sheikh Murtalla Mbakke played the leading role in defining and promoting the spiritual and



educational function of the Murid Diaspora. As early as the 1980s, he traveled throughout Africa, Europe and the United States, urging Murid disciples to unite, to create Qur'anic schools, to educate people about the message of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba and to link up with the Muslim community of the host countries. He encouraged disciples abroad to build community centers (Ker Islam now called Ker Serigne Tuubaa) and mosques, and he also implanted branches of the al-Azhar school abroad

Disciples in the Diaspora responded to this call in different ways. Somebody like Sheikh Abdoulaye Dieye, formed an international Sufi school he named Khidmatul Khadim and which aimed at spreading the message of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba around the world. He wrote many books in French, some translated into English, and launched the Journal *Ndiggel*, the first Murid international journal, that helped greatly disseminate Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba's teachings in Europe, the Indian Ocean, and North America. Sheikh Abdoulaye Dieye achieved some success in attracting Europeans and Americans to the Muridiyya because he

was able to translate the message of Sheikh A Bamba in a language meaningful to them.

Other disciples in the Diaspora invested in the compilation, translation, and edition of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba's writings. We now see many collections of *khassayids* edited by Murid disciples in Italy. There are also translations in English of some of the Sheikh's books such as *Massalik al Jinan*, and also of *Irwaan u Nadiim* of Cheikh Ahmad Lamin Diop in English made by disciples in the United States. In Senegal and abroad, Murids have harnessed the new information and communication technologies as tools of *Dawa*. There are now dozens of Murid websites on the Internet, some better organized and more professional than others, but all seek to disseminate the message of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba. The Majalis project has developed a sophisticated website that aims not only to actualize and spread Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba's teachings, but also to help organize the many Murid dahiras scattered around the word. Many books about the Muridiyya have been or are being written in Western languages by members of the Murid Diaspora

The cultural

As I turn to the cultural aspect of the contribution of the Murid Diaspora, I would like to stress one enduring feature of the personality of the Murid disciple. The Murids are known for their cultural resilience and their capacity to resist cultural alienation. Whether in the urban centers of Senegal or the Western world, they have consistently weathered the intense pressure to abandon their traditions and to assimilate to the local culture.

Wherever they go, they bring with them the name Tuuba and pictures of their holy city and Sheikhs that adorn their houses, businesses and cars. They never hide their affiliation with a Sufi order and a Black saint in a Muslim world where both Sufism and blackness are often looked down upon.

There have been many exhibits about Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba and the Muridiyya in Europe and North America, the first of these was organized by Murid disciples at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris in 1979. These events were made possible because of the impact that the Murid Diaspora had on their host communities abroad. Universities and high schools in the West, and particularly among African-American communities in the United States, increasingly show interest in including the Muridiyya in their curricula on Islam and Africa culture. A greater openness of the Murid community to their host communities and a better mastery of western languages will enhance even further people's attraction to the Muridiyya.

Murid disciples are proud of their cultural heritage and traditions. In their dress, diet, demeanor and speech, Murids in the Diaspora continue to embody and display important features of Murid lore. One single example can

show us the cultural effect that Murids are having on their host communities abroad. This is café Tuubaa, a recipe made of a mixture of ground coffee, clove, and other species, invented by Murid disciples in the daara tarbiyya of rural Bawol, and which has now become an international beverage sought after by people, Murids and others, all over the world and marketed by international companies on the internet.

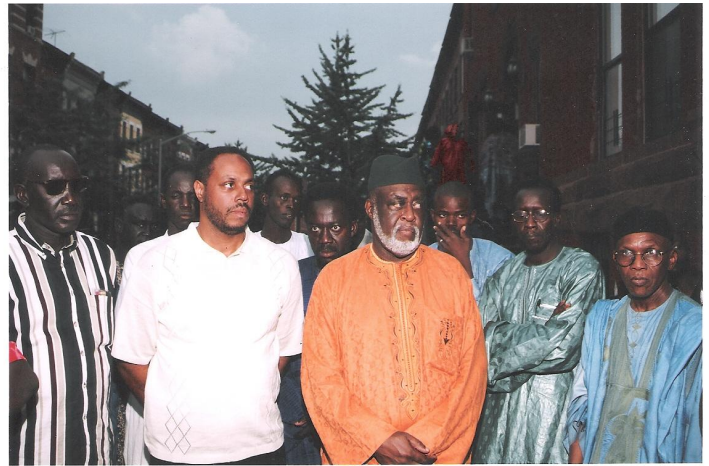
The Economic

Café Tuubaa offers a nice segue to talk about the economic impact of the Murid Diaspora. This is a topic that has fascinated journalists, researchers and policy makers. In the last few years, *The Economist* of London has devoted many articles to Murid businessmen in Europe. *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times* have done the same in the United States. It is estimated that Senegalese expatriates send home every year about 500 Billion CFA, that is more than half of the money that the country receives from donors and international financial institutions. Although the part that the Murid Diaspora contributes to this amount is not known, it is widely believed that the remittances sent by the Murids form the largest portion of the money that immigrants send annually to Senegal. This is plausible because the majority of Senegalese living abroad belongs to the Muridiyya.

It is also possible to measure the impact of Murid immigrants on national development by looking at the transformation in the Murid Holy City of Tuuba. Tuubaa has completely transformed within a couple of decades from a small village to the second largest city of Senegal, boasting over one million inhabitants, with a modern architecture that rivals some cities in Europe and North America. We can also cite the hospital built in Tuubaa by the NGO Matlabul Fawzayni and the work of other dahiras to improve the quality of life in the city. The role of the Diaspora in the development of the real-estate and housing industries in Senegal is perceptible almost everywhere in the country, particularly in the big cities like Dakar, Thies and Kaolack and cities dominated by the Murids such as Luga and Mbakke.

The Murid Diaspora plays a central role in funding the projects designed by the Muridiyya leadership in Tuubaa, and with a better organization it has the potential of achieving even greater things for the community and Senegal as a whole.

We can also see the economic impact of the Murid Diaspora by looking at businesses created in Senegal by former Murid immigrants or by Murids still living abroad. The appearance of 'dollar stores' (1000 CFA store), and other businesses inspired by the sojourn abroad constitute evidence of the attempts by Murids to put into practice at home, the skills that they acquired abroad. This is to say that they are not only repatriating money, they are also



bringing with them economic know how. Murids are also investing in companies at home although most of their economic contributions go to their individual families and their sheikhs.

Gender is another area where the role of the Murid Diaspora is perceptible. In the Muridiyya, women have always played a central role. I can refer here to the persona of Maam Jaara Busso and to the daughters of Sheikh Ahmadu Bamba such as Soxna May Saghiiir. But Murid women in the Diaspora have shown an unusual capacity to thrive economically and culturally. They are always present alongside the men during gatherings, playing their traditional role as hosts, but also working hard and contributing financially. They also constitute dynamic vectors for spreading the influence of the Muridiyya.

As economists, policymakers and consultants have said again and again, the Muridiyya constitutes a great economic asset for Senegal and its full potential is yet to be exploited.

Conclusion

The recent development of the Muridiyya has put to rest misleading scholarly assumptions about its inability to adapt to modernity. In reality, the Murid Diaspora has shown an unusual capacity to harness the transformations brought about by modernity and to put those transformations at the service of the Muridiyya. The Muridiyya has become a global movement as Murids are now found in the five continents. But the globalization of the Muridiyya has not resulted in its dissolution in the so called secular "universal culture" spearheaded by America. Murids remain confident in their ability to reconcile their beliefs and values with the cultures of their host societies around the world. They are not threatened by the West. They believe in the universality and timelessness of Amadu Bamba's message. I have explained the different ways in which the Murid Diaspora contributes to the preservation and dissemination of this message.



2010 CENSUS: **IT'S IN OUR HANDS**

Now is the Time to Get Involved with the 2010 Census

Every 10 years, as mandated by the U.S. Constitution, our nation conducts a census — an effort to count every person living in the United States. The 2010 Census aims to accurately count everyone residing in the U.S., regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, income level, orientation, or immigration status.

The 2010 Census is Easy – it will have one of the shortest census questionnaires in U.S. history, dating back to the nation's first census in 1790. The 2010 Census questionnaire will ask for name, gender, age, race, ethnicity, relationship status and whether the householder owns or rents their home. It will not ask for one's Social Security number, immigration or employment status, or for information related to one's medical or criminal background.

The 2010 Census is Safe – the census form will take only a few minutes on average to complete, and answers are protected by Title 13 of the U.S. Code, one of the strongest privacy laws in the country.

This federal statute forbids any Census employee from sharing any personal information with any other person, organization or government agency; and any violation carries a \$250,000 dollar fine and/or a 5 year prison term. Moreover, all Census employees are sworn to uphold this oath for the rest of their lives.

The key to this endeavor is having every household fill out and mail back a completed census form on or around April 1, 2010. Participation is critical, as the results determine how Congress is apportioned and how more than \$300 billion in federal funds are distributed annually to states and communities.

The 2010 Census is Important – reasons for residents to participate in the upcoming census include:

- The federal government uses census numbers to allocate more than \$300 billion in federal funds annually for community programs and services, such as education, housing and community development, health care services for the elderly, job training and more.
- State, local and tribal governments use census information for planning and allocating funds for new school construction, libraries and other public buildings, highway safety and public transportation systems, new roads and bridges, health and senior centers, location of police and fire departments, and many other projects.
- Community organizations use census information to develop social service programs, community action projects, senior lunch programs and child-care centers.

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- The numbers help businesses identify where to locate factories, shopping centers, movie theaters, banks and offices — activities that often lead to new jobs.
- The census totals are used to determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition, states use the numbers to allocate seats in their state legislatures.

One way your community can help ensure that everyone is counted is to form Complete Count Committees (CCCs). CCCs are volunteer teams consisting of community leaders, elected officials, faith-based groups, schools, businesses, media outlets and others who work together to make sure entire communities are counted.

The efforts of nearly 12,000 local CCCs, when combined with the Census Bureau's paid advertising and Partnership program, made a huge improvement in the quality and accuracy of Census 2000. In 2010, the Census Bureau has expanded these efforts, and will particularly focus on historically "hard-to-count" areas. It will need even more of these committees and other community outreach efforts to ensure that every household in the nation returns its census questionnaire promptly. They will also be instrumental in increasing the accuracy of the count and promoting cooperation with census takers.

"We expect to be in full swing and operating at all levels by Fall 2009," said Lester A. Farthing, Regional Director for the New York Regional Census Center. "One of our challenges will be getting communities where English is not the primary language to understand the importance of the 2010 Census and getting counted. In response, we have hired and trained partnership specialists who represent as many ethnicities as possible in our region," said Mr. Farthing.

CCCs, along with all Census partners, can now start creating awareness within their communities about the upcoming 2010 Census. Census partners can donate space for testing and training temporary census workers, identify job candidates, incorporate Census messaging into existing communications and programming, post and distribute education and promotional materials, conduct census rallies or parades, interfaith breakfasts, and more. CCCs, and partners, can also help identify and host Be Counted sites, where residents who did not receive a questionnaire may complete their forms, and Questionnaire Assistance Centers, where residents may receive assistance with the form, in up to 59 languages.

The U.S. Census Bureau Partnership and Data Services staff can provide you with training materials, timelines, suggested activities, and a Complete Count Committee guide to promote your success.

For more information about partnering with the 2010 Census, contact the NY Regional Census Office at: Tel: (212) 356-3100, or Fax: (212) 871-8991, and ask for a Partnership staff member.

More information can be found at www.2010census.gov.

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