



MEDIA ADVISORY

Can the kindness of corporations make a dent in world poverty?

(UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK, 21 February) Private philanthropy constitutes a significant and increasing share of overall development assistance. Contributions to international development from non-government entities in developed countries -- including businesses and foundations -- grew from \$11.5 billion in 2005 to \$14.6 billion in 2006 -- while official development assistance allocated by the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development fell by 4.5 per cent during that time (to \$104.5 billion in 2006).*

Along with the dollar figures, corporate contributions also brings to the table the expertise, a new perspective and, in the case of many cross-border investors, a sharp focus on local conditions. Moreover, cash outlays are often leveraged by additional in-kind contributions or hours volunteered by skilled professionals.

Corporate giving aimed at fighting world poverty is thus taking its place among the growing component of development assistance that supplements aid from OECD member governments. (Other relatively new sources of development aid include emerging market giants such as China, and oil-producing nations.)

On **25 February**, at **3:00 pm**, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will convene a special meeting with participation of more than 200 corporate executives and foundation chiefs to discuss this trend, and the ways in which corporate giving can best support the objectives of sustainable development and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The programme in the **ECOSOC Chamber** is jointly organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Office for Partnerships, and the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP), an independent international forum of business CEOs and chairpersons undertaking philanthropic missions.

The participants will be welcomed at 3:00 pm by ECOSOC President **Léo Mérorès**, and will then hear addresses by UN Deputy Secretary-General **Asha-Rose Migiro** and CECP Executive Director Charles Moore. Mr. **Amir Dossal**, Executive Director of the UN Office for Partnerships, will sum up the meeting at its 5:30 pm closing.

The first panel discussion, on “Applying strategic philanthropy to the MDGs” will be moderated by **Jeffrey Sachs**, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on the MDGs. Participating on this panel

are **Steve Gunderson**, President and CEO, Council on Foundations; **Ad Melkert**, Associate Administrator, UN Development Programme; **Jane Nelson**, Senior Fellow and Director, Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative, Harvard University; and **Akhtar Badshah**, Microsoft’s Senior Director of Community Affairs.

Kathy Bushkin Calvin, Executive Vice-President and COO of the United Nations Foundation, will moderate the second panel, on leadership and partnerships. Participating on this panel are UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs **Sha Zukang**, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director **Hilde Johnson**, former Goldman Sachs co-chair **John C. Whitehead**, and Western Union CEO **Christina Gold**.

Other corporate leaders at the event will include top executives of Mitsubishi International, Microsoft, Time Warner, KPMG, J.P. Morgan Chase, and heads of foundations such as the Aga Khan, Newman's Own, Merrill Lynch, and CitiBank.

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*Source: OECD/DAC