



April 9, 2008

Dear Friends of Foreign Assistance,

I am pleased to present the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid's (ACVFA) report for its first public meeting of 2008. As a Forum on Democratic Governance and Economic Growth, the February 28 proceedings paid close attention to cutting edge partnerships and an examination of the long-standing history of USAID's work in the two intersecting sectors.

The morning session was kicked off with an overview of the Global Development Commons (GDC). Moderated by Judith Hermanson of CHF International and an ACVFA member, Steve Gale and Bill Hammink from USAID and Helga Leifsdottir from the UN examined the broad landscape of knowledge management tools utilized and currently available but also the challenges that development practitioner's face with the broad array of web sites and communication devices at their disposal.

This was followed by a panel discussion led by Dr. Carol Adelman of the Hudson Institute, the ACVFA's Vice Chair. She provided a snapshot of trends in funding for the developing world, highlighting the overall direction of private philanthropy versus traditional bilateral and multilateral programming. She then moderated a panel presentation on some of the cutting edge means utilized today to promote partnerships in economic growth and democratic governance via the Internet, the private sector, the remittance community, capacity building for indigenous NGOs and the think tank community. New ACVFA members Corey Griffin with Microsoft and Robert Litan with the Kauffman Foundation were joined by Lauren Moser with Shorebank, Jenny Hodgson with the Wings Global Fund for Community Foundations, and Don Terry from the Inter-American Development Bank for a series of presentations that exemplified how philanthropy, the private sector, not-for-profits, multilateral banks and foundations are creating new opportunities.

Immediately before lunch, the ACVFA received Henrietta H. Fore, USAID's Administrator who had invited the Committee at its October 2007 meeting to host a series of Forums in support of the Global Development Commons. With the public meeting centered on economic growth and democratic governance, it was

timely that she previewed USAID's economic growth strategy which has since been approved. The ACVFA embraces its recognition of the linkages with democratic governance and looks forward to its successful implementation both in Washington and in the field.

The afternoon session of the public meeting examined USAID's long history of supporting programs in democratic governance and economic growth as well as the political and business climate needed to succeed. Mary Ott and Dorothy Taft from USAID were joined by Mary Ryckman with the Office of the United States Trade Representative and Simeon Djankov from the World Bank. Moderated by ACVFA Member Ted Weihe, they examined how the groundwork laid in years past has made possible the progress seen today as highlighted in the morning's presentations.

In closing, I commend this report to the ACVFA community. The Committee's Spring meeting will be taking place on June 4 in Atlanta at the Commerce Club. Details may be found on the ACVFA web page:
http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/acvfa/

We look forward to continuing our Charter's mandate to facilitate exchange and consultation between USAID and its partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John D. Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John Sullivan
Chairman
Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid