

Statement by:

**Steve Gunderson, President & CEO, Council on Foundations
Remarks for Round Table on Environmental Sustainability
UN High-Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals**

September 25, 2008

Mr. Chairmen and Distinguished Leaders:

I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly, as well as the co-chairs of this Round Table, for inviting me to participate in today's High-Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals and to contribute to this Round Table on Environmental Sustainability.

As President and CEO of the U.S. Council on Foundations, I have been asked to describe the contribution which U.S. grantmaking foundations are making to the Millennium Development Goals.

A new study of trends in international grantmaking by the Council and the Foundation Center will be published next month. The study looked at international grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a sample of over 1,200 U.S. foundations. It will show that in 2006 giving by U.S. foundations for all international purposes exceeded \$5 billion -- with \$2.6 billion supporting activities related to the MDGs.

While the MDGs may not be the impetus for giving by U.S. foundations, our priorities are often congruent with the eight goals. Many of America's grantmaking foundations of all types and sizes are contributing to MDG-related activities around the world. In fact, many were pursuing these same objectives long before the Goals were established in 2000.

Of the \$2.6 billion going to MDG activities in 2006:

- **\$657 million to (Goal 1) support for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger**
- **\$657 million to (Goal 6) combating HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases**
- **\$428 million to (Goal 4) Reducing child mortality**
- **\$330 million to (Goal 7) Ensuring environmental sustainability**
- **\$265 million to (Goal 8) Developing a global partnership for development**
- **\$119 million to (Goal 5) Improving maternal health**
- **\$102 million to (Goal 3) Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and**
- **\$30 million to (goal 2) Achieving universal primary education.**

Despite some inevitable double-counting, these figures nevertheless provide a useful snapshot indicating substantial U.S. foundation engagement in support of the MDGs in 2006.

At a time of great focus on efficiency and impact of our philanthropic work, foundations are increasingly collaborating in their efforts with each other as well as across sectors with business, government, academia and multilateral organizations. To mention just two such examples,

- The Rockefeller and Gates foundations' Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is designed to increase productivity and incomes among the continent's smallholder farmers. This relates to the MDG 1 – to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- A second initiative by the Packard and Hewlett Foundations called "Design to Win," seeks to mobilize a multi-pronged global strategy to combat global warming. This relates to MDG 7 – to ensure environmental sustainability.

Both of these initiatives offer many opportunities for engagement with governments and multilateral organizations which have the resources to take them to a wider scale and effect necessary public policy changes.

Building a Public/Private/Philanthropic Partnership to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals:

In my brief time, I want to encourage the United Nations and each respective nation to recognize that philanthropic dollars may be the world's best source of "risk capital!" These philanthropic investments in real change are:

- Exploratory
- Cutting edge innovation
- Timely
- Catalytic, and
- Collaborative.

Philanthropy serves the MDGs by:

- Pushing the boundaries of current interventions
- Fueling innovative ideas across all the goals
- Responding quickly to crisis and good ideas
- Taking the early chances on innovation and risk, and
- Inspiring other philanthropy and greater levels of government support to engage in this work.

But we will not make progress without a change in the public-philanthropic partnership. In February of this year, I was given an earlier opportunity to speak here at the United Nations. My request then remains today. If you seek greater philanthropic participation – and I know you do – then the United Nations must take a leadership role to:

1. Help develop equivalency standards for NGO's around the world, promoting a quick and uniform process for recognizing such organizations under our respective nation's non-profit laws.

2. Help us develop the knowledge-management systems that will enable us to better identify suitable NGO partners and to monitor international grants across great distance.

All of this confirms my deep belief that for global philanthropy to grow in both size and service, we must develop a Global Philanthropic Compact. At a time of such great human need around the world, and at a time when we all share a common commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, we must create the international protocols that enable us to do this work. Sixty years ago, the United Nations led the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We are in the midst of numerous international agreements promoting increased trade and economic exchange. Certainly the next step in this process is the development of a Global Compact for Philanthropy.

Thank you.

APPENDIX

Following is a sampling of foundation grants in support of the Millennium Development Goals in 2006:

- The Rockefeller Foundation's \$50 million grant for the Green Revolution in Africa, which aims to improve productivity and profitability of small-scale farmers, is directly related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (Goal 1).
- The GE Foundation's \$267,000 grant to the China Youth Development Foundation for rural teacher training and the Citi Foundation's \$374,000 support for basic education expansion in India contribute to the achievement of universal primary education (Goal 2).
- The Ford Foundation's \$1.7 million grant to the Latin American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights in Brazil supports the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (Goal 3).
- The Bill & Melinda Gates' Foundation's \$35 million grant to the World Health Organization for the rapid scale-up of maternal, neonatal and child health interventions in Africa directly supports the reduction of child mortality (Goal 4).
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation's \$1 million grant to the Ethiopian Public Health Association to strengthen health care and family planning extension services to women contributes to the improvement of maternal health (Goal 5).
- A \$133,000 grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation to the Bambisanani Project to provide care and support for women and children with HIV/AIDS in Western Africa supports the objective of combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (Goal 6).
- A \$12 million gift from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to Conservation International for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund and a \$1.5 million grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to the Mario Molina Center for Strategic Studies of Energy and the Environment for work on climate change and other issues are examples of contributions to ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal 7).
- The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation's \$350,000 grant to the Third World Network to strengthen the capacity of developing country NGOs and decision makers to participate effectively in international trade policy, globalization and sustainable development discussions contributes to developing a global partnership for development (Goal 8).

These are just a few of the thousands of grants that U.S. foundations made in 2006 and continue to make that advance the Millennium Development Goals. U.S. foundation support for international grantmaking has grown dramatically in the past fifteen years and all indications are that this strong

growth will continue. While global health issues and poverty reduction will remain key funding areas going forward, environmental sustainability is rapidly becoming a third major focus.