

MFAN MODERNIZING FOREIGN ASSISTANCE NETWORK

Businesses, NGOs, former Government Officials Urge President Obama and Congress to Make Global Development and Foreign Assistance Reform a Priority

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March 17, 2009 (WASHINGTON): Leaders from diverse communities today unveiled an open letter urging President Obama and Congressional leaders to “make modernization of our foreign assistance programs a priority... [and] make global development a co-equal pillar of U.S. foreign policy alongside defense and diplomacy.”

The open letter, published as an advertisement in the *Politico* newspaper, was endorsed by over 140 influential individuals and organizations, among them prominent business leaders, former government officials and uniformed military officers, academics, and non-profit leaders. The coalition that developed and released the letter, the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), also offered the public a means to sign on through the MFAN website: www.modernizingforeignassistance.net.

In a statement prepared for the letter’s release, MFAN Co-Chairs David Beckmann and Steve Radelet said: “President Obama, his foreign policy advisors, and Congressional leaders deserve recognition for their unprecedented commitments to elevating global development as a tool of U.S. foreign policy, and the signatories of this letter pledge support for that effort. The Obama Administration and key supporters in Congress clearly recognize that to address the urgent challenges we face abroad and restore America’s global reputation as a leader, we must strengthen U.S. efforts to alleviate poverty, fight disease, create opportunity, and foster sustainable security in the developing world. To do this as strategically and effectively as we must at this time of economic crisis, it is critical that we modernize our outdated foreign assistance system. Today, that system is not as coordinated and efficient as it could be because too many agencies oversee too many programs, and we lack both an overall global development strategy and up-to-date legislation to organize our efforts and maximize their impact.”

Signatories of the letter include:

Individuals:

- David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World and Co-Chair, MFAN
- Steve Radelet, Senior Fellow, Center for Global Development and Co-Chair, MFAN
- Ambassador John Danilovich, fmr. CEO, Millennium Challenge Corporation
- J. Brian Atwood, Peter McPherson, Andrew Natsios, fmr. USAID Administrators
- Stuart Eizenstat, fmr. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury and former U.S. Ambassador to NATO
- Carleton S. Fiorina, fmr. Chairman, President & CEO, Hewlett-Packard Company
- William H. Gates, Sr.

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- Walter Isaacson, President & CEO, Aspen Institute
- Ray Offenheiser, President, Oxfam America
- Mary Robinson, fmr. President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Edward W. Scott, Jr., Co-founder and fmr. President, BAE Systems, Inc.
- John M. Shalikashvili, fmr. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- John C. Whitehead, fmr. Co-Chairman, Goldman Sachs & Co. and fmr. Deputy Secretary of State
- Sam Worthington, CEO, InterAction

Organizations:

- Bread for the World
- Cargill
- Center for Global Development
- CARE
- Global AIDS Alliance
- International Rescue Committee
- Mars Corporation
- MercyCorps
- ONE Campaign
- Save the Children
- World Wildlife Fund

For a full list of open letter signatories and more information on foreign assistance reform, visit www.modernizingforeignassistance.net.