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**Speech by  
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**Private and Public Partnerships – Opportunities with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome**

Thank you for that kind introduction. And good morning to all of you. I hope you all had a nice trip to this great city, which, I understand, is famous for having more fountains than only one other place in the world, and that is my new residence -- Rome.

As Mike mentioned, I have the honor of serving as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome, Italy. There are three major UN agencies in Rome that are dedicated solely to alleviating hunger and poverty: the World Food Program, or WFP, our biggest partner at this conference; the Food and Agriculture Organization also known as FAO, a knowledge and information-based organization that helps developing countries and countries in transition modernize and improve agricultural practices to ensure good nutrition and food security; and the International Fund for Agricultural Development or IFAD.

It's with great purpose that I'm with you here today in the literal heartland of America to talk about partnering with these three agencies to end hunger and poverty. On behalf of the U.S. Mission in Rome, I would like to thank all of you who are working on this noble effort around the world.

Each and every one of us has hopes and dreams, but when you face some of the challenges, some of the odds that I have seen as I have traveled the world, to 67 developing countries as Peace Corps Director, and another four in the past four months in my current capacity as Ambassador, the challenges can be daunting. They are sad. They are tragic. In life I have been blessed with opportunities that have fostered in me a profound, personal and professional commitment to building partnerships, partnerships which will help overcome the challenges faced by so many of the world's most vulnerable.

All of you working in this field will agree that every time you travel to a country and see hunger, and people who are struggling to live day-to-day, not knowing where their next meal will come from, you return home very grateful for the blessings granted to you in life, to be able to eat, to be able to sustain yourself. Someone once said, "To whom much is given, much is required."

That is why the United States has become a leader in the war on hunger, the war on malnutrition and the war on poverty in the world. The U.S. today accounts for 44% of all of the contributions to the World Food Program.

In 2006, the United States gave over one billion dollars in food aid to millions of hungry people suffering from natural disasters, wars, and disease. WFP is the largest humanitarian agency of the United Nations. It has a leading role today in humanitarian emergencies in Darfur, Southern Africa, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Iraq, and many other parts of the world.

We are also the largest donor to FAO, giving almost one quarter of the budget. Yes, the numbers are significant, but more important is the significance of the philosophy--the commitment to eradicate world hunger and poverty in the world today.

As President Bush has stated, “We agree on the need for partnerships across borders and among both the public and private sectors. We must call upon the compassion, energy, and generosity of people everywhere. This means that not only governments can help, but also private corporations, foundations, faith-based groups, and nongovernmental organizations as well in the fight against poverty. We fight against poverty because opportunity is a fundamental right to human dignity. We fight against poverty because faith requires it and conscience demands it. And we fight against poverty with a growing conviction that major progress is within our reach.”

We seek your partnership and collaboration in overcoming the daunting tasks before us. In the next few moments that I have I would like to speak on:

- o why partnerships are important to end hunger and poverty;
- o why we need private/public partnerships with the UN food and agriculture agencies in Rome;
- o how you can partner with these agencies; and
- o provide some examples of longstanding and new partnerships.

Why is partnering important in this endeavor? Partnerships mean the formation of alliances to cooperate and collaborate by two or more entities to reach a common goal. Partnering can be in many different ways – from contributing financial and human resources to contributing technical expertise and knowledge, to making connections and links that lead to more of these contributions from others.

Why do we need private/public partnerships to end hunger? As we near 2015, the year the world collectively set under the Millennium Development Goals to reduce by half the proportion of hungry in the world today, we see how we need to work much harder to reach that mark. Neither the U.S. Government nor host governments nor the UN agencies and NGOs can achieve the noble task of ending hunger and alleviating food insecurity alone.

We need partnerships at all levels across the entire spectrum: from the grassroots villagers in the field to the governments and international agencies responsible for assisting them.

In the last six months I had the privilege to observe WFP, FAO and IFAD programs at work in Mali, Egypt, Malawi, and Zambia, where I interacted with these organizations’ most basic partners—the beneficiaries—to fulfill their aspirations for a life free of hunger. Many of these projects provided the personal satisfaction that beneficiaries are contributing to their own and their community’s betterment through food-for-assets efforts that: brought forth green fields out of the desert in Egypt; reduced the pillaging of natural resources in Zambia through the exchange of food and work for homemade weapons and snares; and created water catchment structures for irrigating the heart of the Sahel.

Many of you have witnessed these grassroots partnerships either in your current or previous professions. I suppose that there are many former Peace Corps volunteers in the audience (can we see a show of hands?) While I was Director of the Peace Corps, the world’s largest international volunteer organization, I witnessed the enduring good will that such grassroots engagement brings.

The Peace Corps has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with FAO in Rome that we are using to deepen this involvement.

Under my tenure, the Peace Corps also developed an MOU with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), whose foundation of success is based on partnerships with host nations to meet the challenge of HIV/AIDS. The scale of the U.S. engagement with the world through volunteerism and philanthropy are foreign concepts to most societies. Yet this culture of compassion provides enduring results in the form of institutions such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and a cadre of former Peace Corps volunteers that now populates development agencies and foreign policy institutions around the world.

Under the leadership of President Bush, the U.S. has witnessed a rebirth in partnerships in the international development assistance arena. Our government is making a switch from the traditional donor-recipient relationship in the past to one of true and transformational partnerships. But the mindset of partnerships reaches beyond government circles. Private foundations are making a profound mark – for example, the “Gates/Buffer Factor” – has become a catalyst for directing unprecedented attention to foreign assistance, and not just in this country.

Efforts are currently being advanced and supported by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for all its members to re-examine the public (state entities) relationship with the private (companies and foundations) because here lies the secret behind American generosity.

America's philanthropy is exceptional not only in the magnitude of contributions but in its ability to build partnerships. We understand the power and potential of partnerships. As one of the most generous nations, we are instilled with compassion that is translated into many altruistic acts – through volunteerism such as the Peace Corps, and through billions of dollars of private contributions annually. In 2006, U.S. foreign assistance topped \$22.7 billion, which includes the \$1.2 billion contribution to WFP and a 33% increase or \$1.4 billion to sub-Saharan Africa alone (to reach a record \$5.6 billion for the region).

But U.S. private sector grants and personal remittances, which also contribute to increased growth and improved living standards in developing countries, significantly exceed our foreign aid budget by a factor of three: the Index of Global Philanthropy estimates U.S. private giving at a whopping \$71 billion in 2004 -- the latest figures available (broken down: \$3.4 billion from U.S. foundations, \$4.9 billion from U.S. business, \$9.7 billion from U.S. NGOs, \$4.5 billion from religious ministries, \$1.7 billion from U.S. scholarships, and \$47 billion from personal remittances).

And let's not forget the significance that trade, another form of partnership, brings to the table. Recognizing that trade generates important capital flows in countries, the United States' main strategy under aid through trade is to provide developing countries with the tools that will help them build their capacity to maximize opportunities and improve the linkage between trade and development.

Partnerships through U.S. initiatives such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the U.S. commitment to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), for example, will help governments to achieve broad-based reforms that will lead to an accelerated decline in the number of people living in poverty, addressing broader transition issues so that rural farmers, small businesses and women can benefit

from agricultural and other alliances. The U.S. is the largest contributor of aid for trade, giving approximately \$1.4 billion in 2006, more than double the level of 2001.

Some may ask, “Why do we need the UN if we are so generous as a government and as a people?” Under the UN flag the UN agencies offer us a path into countries or areas we may otherwise not be able to reach. We can sometimes only reach the people who need our help with the UN or the International Red Cross. Remember, the people suffer, oftentimes at the hands of governments. Transformational diplomacy and development through our UN partners is key toward reaching the 2015 goal we have set. Alliances with the UN agencies such as WFP, FAO and IFAD provide leverage (as we combine our efforts to reach more people), legitimacy (as the UN agencies are internationally sanctioned by their over 180 member states), worldwide access, and specialized expertise.

It is in our best interests to protect our investments in agencies such as the WFP, FAO and IFAD to ensure not only an effective and efficient response to emergencies and disasters, but to promote longer term development processes that mitigate future disasters, alleviate poverty and permit nations to help themselves.

It is important to note that no country has ever become a sustainable democracy providing stability and prosperity to its people without transforming its agricultural sector and developing its commodity and food markets. This is why the United States devotes substantial resources to creating a world where everyone can eat to sustain their work, their health, their prosperity, and their future.

Secretary Rice has articulated a new U.S. approach to international relations that she calls ‘transformational diplomacy.’ “The objective of transformational diplomacy is: to work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people -- and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. Transformational diplomacy is rooted in **partnership, not paternalism** -- in doing things with other people, not for them.”

Private sector enterprises and foundations can become long-term partners to eradicate chronic causes of hunger and poverty through transformational partnerships. Many socially responsible businesses are recognizing this fact and are uniting to be a stronger force in this endeavor. Public/private partnerships can transform the field of agriculture and development and help eradicate hunger in the process. This transformation is not only brought forth through the form of cash contributions, but also through the form of high level technical expertise and in-kind services.

Some of many the transformational partnerships the UN Agencies in Rome have made or are in the process of making include:

- o In 2003, WFP launched its first major corporate partnership with TNT, whose director will also participate in a partnerships panel tomorrow moderated by USAID’s Global Development Alliance to tell you, I believe, about how TNT shares its expertise, donates cash and provides logistics support in emergencies. In Malawi, I saw an example of innovative partnership, where TNT sought out WFP to help it curb the loss to HIV/AIDS of nearly 60 percent of its truck-driver workforce through a pilot Wellness Center project aimed at reducing the disease’s spread along Malawi’s borders;

- o Citigroup Corporate Investment Bank (CIB) has helped WFP develop an emergency preparedness and response network for corporate partners in humanitarian crises. Through the network, companies can provide critical resources and assets to preposition in WFP depots around the world;
- o The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) is providing pro-bono consulting services ranging from a business process review to studies on WFP's supply-chain management, donation forecasting and decentralization for more efficient programming to reach more beneficiaries timely;
- o International Paper began a partnership with WFP in 2005 to feed primary school aged children in four impoverished areas of Kenya; and
- o The UN Foundation joined Vodafone to provide support for an early warning emergency system and overall communication support during humanitarian emergencies.

In addition, the American Red Cross (ARC) made an exceptional donation of \$50 million to WFP for tsunami recovery efforts in Indonesia. The ARC also established its first ever partnership with FAO's emergency operations and rehabilitation division to support recovery activities aimed at "building back better" fishing communities lost in the tsunami.

Lastly, New Holland, the Pennsylvania farm machinery company, also has partnered with FAO in food security programs in Cambodia, Ecuador, Mali and elsewhere, while FAO is building working relationships on innovative small farm development and supply chain restructuring with the Sustainable Food Laboratory (SFL), an international community of business and social leaders, actively seeking ways to bring real change to the ways we grow, harvest, buy, and distribute food. In addition to NGOs, government and academic institutions, SFL members include Aramark, General Mills, HJ Heinz, and Starbucks.

Private/public partnerships will lead to progress -- progress toward our collective goal of ending poverty and hunger. We cannot do it alone and we must look within ourselves to complete the task at hand. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness. Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

Thank you.