



Millennium Challenge Corporation

Reducing Poverty Through Growth

PRESS RELEASE

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Millennium Challenge Corporation Names Seven Countries Eligible for Threshold Program

Washington D.C. – Today Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) announced the selection of the first seven countries eligible to apply for Threshold Program assistance. This program is open to countries that came close to, but did not qualify for, Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) eligibility and have demonstrated a commitment to meeting MCA’s selection criteria. Millennium Challenge Corporation believes that a sound policy framework creates an environment where development assistance can be most effective, and so has designed the Threshold Program to help countries that are committed to making policy reforms improve their performance in areas of ruling justly, encouraging economic freedom, and investing in people.

Albania, East Timor, Kenya, Sao Tome and Principe, Tanzania, Uganda, and Yemen are invited to submit their plans for improving performance on policies that Millennium Challenge Corporation evaluates. Both the US Agency for International Development and MCC will assess the proposals based on the political commitment of each country to undertake reforms. Although the Threshold Program is designed as a way to help countries work toward Millennium Challenge Account eligibility, simply participating in this program will not guarantee that they will qualify for MCA selection. Success under the Threshold Program will be judged based only on concrete and significant efforts made by governments.

In announcing the start of the Threshold Program, MCC Chief Executive Officer Paul Applegarth emphasized that “Making policy changes will require strong leadership and commitment, and Millennium Challenge Corporation will support countries that are willing to undertake these efforts.” Welcoming today’s announcement, USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios said that his agency looks forward to working with MCC and Threshold countries on the new program, although he noted, “Progress is not going to be quick or easy; it is going to require sustained leadership in the countries themselves.” The Threshold Program will be managed mainly through a partnership between Millennium Challenge Corporation and the U.S. Agency for International Development, although other US government agencies may also implement parts of the program.

Millennium Challenge Corporation, a new government corporation designed to work with some of the poorest countries in the world, is based on the principle that aid is most effective when it reinforces sound political, economic, and social policies that promote poverty reduction through economic growth.

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