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REDUCING POVERTY THROUGH GROWTH

# Transcript

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## Global Memorandum Of Understanding Signing Ceremony

### Moderator

KAREN TURNER,  
USAID

### Signers

Henrietta Fore,  
Acting Administrator,  
USAID

Gerri Elliott,  
Corporate Vice President, Worldwide Public Sector,  
Microsoft International

Ambassador John Danilovich,  
CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation

Dr. Thomas Kenyon,  
Deputy Principal Coordinator,  
PEPFAR

The National Press Club  
Washington, D.C.

### Remarks

KAREN TURNER: If everyone could take their seats, we're about to begin. My name is Karen Turner, and I'll be moderating this session for the group. On behalf of USAID, I would like to welcome you here to the official signing of the Global Memorandum of Understanding between Microsoft Corporation, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief – known as PEPFAR – and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Our signatories today are Acting USAID Administrator Henrietta Fore, Dr. Thomas – well, let me do it in order – Ms. Gerri Elliott, Ambassador John Danilovich, chief executive officer of the MCC, and Dr. Thomas Kenyon, deputy principal coordinator of PEPFAR.

Each signatory will now sign the MOU, after which we will have brief remarks.

(Pause.)

Acting Administrator Fore, could you now come to the podium and provide your remarks?

HENRIETTA FORE: Thank you very much, Karen. I am delighted to join my colleagues from the office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator of the United States Department of State, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, Microsoft Corporation. And my good friend, Gerri Elliott, it is a pleasure to see you here and good to have a private sector company by our side.

Through this memorandum of understanding, we agreed collaboratively to mobilize ideas and resources, skills and technologies to spur innovation and deliver results on common development goals. This global relationship with Microsoft and with PEPFAR and MCC signals the beginning of a new era for USAID, an era in which the connections between government agencies, private sector partners, and resources matter more than ever before. Global alliances are part of our solution.

In the world of international development today, partnerships such as this one are critical to the realization of sustained, long-term development growth and success across all sectors. As complex challenges manifest themselves differently in each country, no one approach or type of partnership effort will succeed in the same way in all contexts. Through greater collaboration, alliance building, and coordination among stakeholders, all these partnerships will produce better results in contexts that vary across the world. Through this global MOU, we will be able to form alliances at a faster pace anywhere in the world for a greater impact.

At USAID, partnerships do not only define what we do, but they define how we do it. For 40 years, USAID has worked closely and effectively through partnerships with non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and foundations to implement programming for humanitarian assistance, for building democracy and stability and prosperity around the world. But now, we understand that we also need to be harnessing the growing technical capabilities, influence, skill, and opportunity that other private sector actors, such as Microsoft, bring to the development programming. For this reason, USAID is working to engage private enterprises across the development spectrum through our Global Development Alliance.

Since 2001, the Global Development Alliance has expanded our network in the not-for-profit world through more than 600 alliances with over 1,700 partners. We have used \$2.1 billion of the public's money to leverage \$5.8 billion in private money. And in the process, leveraging the imagination and energy of thousands of people in private businesses who have not traditionally been engaged in critical development issues.

Microsoft is a prime example of a company that has sought to meet this goal. Microsoft's commitment to help those who do not have access to technology to overcome the barriers to social and economic empowerment is commendable. Since 2002, Microsoft and USAID have cooperated on 16 public/private alliances covering anti-corruption, governance, civil society, strengthening democracy, economic growth, trade, education, and workforce training.

This global MOU moves us all in the right direction, toward a deeper commitment between all partners to improve the lives of millions around the world. We pledge to work together to advance global healthcare, expand education opportunities, enable the economic development, and promote good governance, as well as facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid and disaster relief. Together, we are paving the way for a deeper, more effective development impact to change people's lives for the better. We look forward to working closely with Microsoft and our sister U.S. government agencies over the next five years. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. TURNER: Now, we will have Ms. Gerri Elliott, corporate vice president of Microsoft International.

GERRI ELLIOTT: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I must first thank Acting Administrator Fore, and Ambassador Danilovich, and Dr. Kenyon for this tremendous partnership opportunity. This inaugural collaboration among USAID, MCC, and PEPFAR represents the most comprehensive commitment with one government towards global development challenges. It also marks the first time that USAID and MCC and PEPFAR have joined forces and have collaboratively executed a memorandum with a private sector company.

All of us share the goal of building capacity and promoting international development. And we've all struggled with solutions for disaster recovery, educational transformation, anti-corruption, and of course our global health issues. But from these goals and challenges, we've learned some very important things.

First, no one organization can do it alone. And second, technology has a critical role to play in solving some of the world's toughest problems. It is only through partnerships with international organizations with NGOs and with government agencies like the three wonderful ones represented here that we can make the most of technology in promoting development and economic opportunity in countries around the globe. Real solutions come from combining the promise of IT with the on-the-ground experience and expertise of the development community.

Now, we've been engaged with these partnerships for decades now and we've learned many lessons on how best to incorporate technology to enhance and support our collective mission. Whether it's a microfinance project in Indonesia after the aftermath of the tsunami or providing skills and opportunity for at-risk youth in Guatemala, we've learned when to get out of the way of better organizations and to stick to our own core competencies. So there is a shared learning on what has worked and what hasn't worked and a shared commitment through today's agreement to explore many new and better ways for collaboration.

We'll bring our technology know-how to promote good governance, to enhance humanitarian assistance, to enable economic development through enterprise promotion and new tools for small businesses. We'll help build skills and capacity through education and training. And we'll continue to advance global healthcare and address potential challenges like HIV/AIDS through the effective application of technology.

So we're very excited for the enormous opportunities that this partnership represents today, and we're thrilled and honored that USAID, PEPFAR, and MCC have chosen to collaborate with us. On behalf of my company, Microsoft, and my entire worldwide public sector team, I'm delighted to commit to you the very best that our company has to offer. Thanks very much.

(Applause.)

MS. TURNER: Next we'll have Ambassador John Danilovich, chief executive officer of the MCC.

JOHN DANILOVICH: Today marks a very special milestone for the Millennium Challenge Corporation, for USAID, and for the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Microsoft as we sign this MOU outlining our shared vision for the international development goals that we do hold in common. The Millennium Challenge Corporation is dedicated to reducing poverty through sustainable economic growth around the world. And this MOU allows us to amplify these efforts by cooperating with others equally committed to improving the lives of the poor.

In three ways, this MOU reminds us that we cannot accomplish – what we can accomplish even more together than we can alone. First, it demonstrates the power of partnerships. We will explore opportunities to collaborate in countries and on specific projects. Because MCC insists upon country ownerships, it will not be MCC here in Washington, but the countries themselves that take charge and lead their development and will engage with Microsoft in this particular endeavor.

Second, it signals the power of private enterprise. Today's MOU was a perfect example of the types of public/private partnerships we encourage and embrace. This is the first time that these three U.S. government agencies have formed an alliance with the private sector to promote international development. That doesn't mean that individually we haven't cooperated on projects previously, but this is the first time that all three of us have joined with an organization such as Microsoft with regards to international development. And we hope this MOU will become a model for many more public/private partnerships.

We believe that government assistance alone will not lift countries out of poverty and bring lasting prosperity to the poor. The private sector has a tremendous role to play. And without any doubt, Microsoft continues to be visionary and trailblazing in this regard. We want to leverage MCC assistance and use it to create the very conditions for a pro-business and pro-investment environment where private enterprise can flourish and drive sustainable economic growth.

Third it unleashes the power of human potential. We believe that our joint efforts through this MOU can make a difference in the individual lives of the poor, as we seek to share our respective strengths and experiences and resources.

In all of these ways, the cooperation we celebrate today through this MOU will help in the fight against poverty and towards a life of opportunity for those most in need. Gerri, Microsoft, and MCC have had many conversations about working together for some time. I hope this MOU is the first of many cooperations between us. Henrietta, your leadership on MCC's board of directors and USAID's work in support of MCC, particularly in our threshold program, provides a context for our collaboration that this MOU extends even further. Tom, since some of our MCC countries depend upon PEPFAR, specifically in Lesotho, we have a foundation upon which to cooperate even more.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation is proud to discover synergies and cooperate with each of you in your organizations as we look forward to the significant work we have to do together. Thank you very much and I now would like to yield the podium to Tom, the U.S. Global AIDS coordinator.

Is that my role, Karen? (Laughter.) Sorry, took it from you.

(Applause.)

THOMAS KENYON: Thank you, Ambassador, for multitasking. (Laughter.) Thank you all for being today. It's my pleasure to represent the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, and specifically Ambassador Mark Dybul, the global AIDS coordinator who would have loved to have been here, but regrets he was not able to be here for this very much landmark event.

At PEPFAR, we're elated to enter into this groundbreaking partnership with Microsoft and our sister U.S. government agencies, the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the United States Agency for International Development. Curbing the HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the most challenging global endeavors of our time. Approximately 40 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS around the world and 3.8 million individuals were newly infected in 2006 alone.

The United States government through PEPFAR is leading an unprecedented scale-up of HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment to answer this challenge. We are well on our way to meeting the ambitious targets the president set out for the first phase of PEPFAR. Country teams will submit their annual program result data to us shortly and we expect the data will demonstrate impressive continued progress.

The success by countries that PEPFAR has been privileged to support is indeed remarkable, but much, much more remains to be done. That's why President Bush has proposed to double our initial commitment, providing \$30 billion over the next five years to meet ambitious new goals across the range of prevention, treatment, and care. We've been deeply grateful for Congress' bipartisan support throughout these early years, and we look forward to working with them as we move ahead. In fact, Ambassador Dybul will be testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee this Wednesday, which will be an important milestone as we move forward.

Of course, the fight against the HIV pandemic is not a fight the U.S. government or all governments can win alone. It will take innovative strategies and partnerships like this one. We're expanding beyond traditional public sector to include public/private sector paradigms to indeed turn the tide against HIV. From the perspective of PEPFAR, this partnership is a platform for innovative technology-based solutions to HIV prevention, treatment, and care challenges. These challenges include access to information, health information, network creation, clinical management, and data tracking, and of course, information for HIV prevention and behavior change.

This public/private partnership with Microsoft is the second for PEPFAR in the information and communications technology sector. The Phones for Health collaboration is using the widespread mobile phone coverage in the developing world to strengthen health management and information systems. PEPFAR remains committed to sustainable impact in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Partnerships with the information and communication technology sector are critical to bringing innovation; not only to our programs, but to the future health and development plans of partner countries.

Socially committed companies like Microsoft are playing a growing and pivotal role in transforming health and information systems, not to mention community and country economies. We at PEPFAR look forward to collaborative planning and implementation with Microsoft, and to the impact we'll have together for the people we have the privilege to serve. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. TURNER: Now, I will turn the moderation duties over to Jennifer Nevin of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

(Laughter.)

JENNIFER NEVIN: This concludes the program. Thank you all for coming. Some of the officials will be able to stay for a few minutes if there are questions, and questions from the press. Thank you all for coming.

(Applause.)

(END)