



# African Development Foundation

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## **Minnesota Businessman, Philanthropist Appointed Chairman of U.S. Development Agency**

### ***Ward Brehm Takes Oath as Chair of African Development Foundation; Capitol Hill Ceremony Attended by Senators Inhofe, Dayton and Coleman***

WASHINGTON – September 15, 2004 – The African Development Foundation (ADF), a United States government agency with a mission to help African community-based organizations and small businesses achieve sustainable economic growth, announced today that distinguished Wayzata, Minn. businessman and philanthropist Ward Brehm was sworn in Wednesday as the new chairman of ADF's board of directors at a bipartisan ceremony held in the United States Capitol. The morning ceremony was attended by Minnesota Senators Mark Dayton (D) and Norm Coleman (R), along with Senators James Inhofe (R-OK), Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Representatives Mark Kennedy (R-MN) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN).

"I am excited to join the leadership of a unique and indispensable federal agency, an agency dedicated to helping African communities and small-to-medium sized African enterprises create new jobs, top-quality products and higher incomes for hard-working men and women and their families," Mr. Brehm said.

"I have been working on the ground with community-based organizations in east Africa for more than a decade, and that experience has taught me that giving real ownership over the development process is important to generating real accountability and achieving sustainable development results," Mr. Brehm added. "ADF long ago recognized that supporting demand-driven, community-led development is critical to the future of the world's poorest continent. That's what makes ADF's work so compelling."

Mr. Brehm is founder, CEO and chairman of two Minneapolis-based insurance consulting companies, the Brehm Group and Capstone Advisors. He has also been actively engaged in African development issues - as a private citizen, church member and member of two U.S. Congressional delegations - for more than a decade.

Mr. Brehm's interest in the continent began in 1992, when he participated in a World Vision International tour of famine-affected regions of east Africa. That experience led him to establish the Windpump Project, a charity that helps rural communities acquire sustainable technology for clean water. He has also become actively engaged in building strong working relationships between business and community leaders in the United States and Africa. Mr. Brehm currently serves on the board of directors of the Sustainable Healthcare Enterprise Foundation, and he is the author of two memoirs of his work in Africa, *Life through a Different Lens* (1993) and *White Man Walking* (2003). Profits from the sales of both books go to support the African charitable organizations that Mr. Brehm has established.

In a joint statement released by Senators Dayton and Coleman, Senator Dayton praised Mr. Brehm for his personal devotion to the people of Africa and said that Mr. Brehm's "personal commitment and superb business prowess will make him an excellent chairman." Senator Coleman said that he and Mr. Brehm agree that ensuring

Africa's economic and political security is vital to America's interests, and he stated that he looks forward to working with Mr. Brehm on efforts "to build a brighter, more stable future for the African people."

Senator Inhofe, who initially proposed Mr. Brehm's nomination to the ADF Board, praised Mr. Brehm for his personal dedication to Africa and African development. "Ward and I have shared the separate-but-similar experiences of having our hearts broken by the overwhelming plight of rural Africans. He is passionately devoted to building America's bonds of friendship and goodwill with Africa, and he will strengthen ADF's efforts to generate sustainable development for Africa in the 21st century," Senator Inhofe said.

ADF President Nathaniel Fields praised Mr. Brehm's appointment and thanked President George W. Bush and members of the United States Senate for their support. "Ward Brehm is a man with invaluable experience in Africa. He has worked tirelessly to help poor and marginalized communities achieve sustainable gains in health, income and employment. His insight and advocacy will help ADF expand its support for programs focused on promoting small-and-medium-sized enterprise development; developing new trade and investment opportunities for African small businesses; and giving women, youth and at-risk groups the capacity to mitigate the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS."

ADF will celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its active program operations in Africa during its 2004-2005 fiscal year. ADF is the only federal agency working solely at the community level in Africa to alleviate poverty and promote broad-based sustainable development. Over the past two decades, the Foundation has funded nearly 1,600 community-based projects, with 250 projects currently receiving support. In FY 2002, ADF provided support totaling US \$15.3 million to 90 new grassroots projects and community-based initiatives in Africa. In addition, ADF disbursed US \$20.1 million to existing projects funded in earlier fiscal years. The Foundation has active program operations in 15 sub-Saharan African countries.

For more information on ADF and its work in building bonds between the American people and communities across Africa, go to [www.adf.gov](http://www.adf.gov).

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