



Washington, D.C. – Shari Berenbach was sworn in on Tuesday, December 18 as the 8th President and CEO of the United States African Development Foundation (USADF). Jack Leslie, Chairman of the Board of Directors, presided over the ceremony that brought together African diplomats, Agency staff, development leaders, and friends and family of Ms. Berenbach.

Mr. Leslie praised the wealth of development experience and relationship building in Africa and across the globe that the new President brings to USADF. “At a time when more attention is on Africa’s tremendous resources and opportunities, Shari’s record of championing innovative approaches to financing solutions and impact investing across sectors will complement USADF very well,” Mr. Leslie said. “Her ability to create connections and establish partnerships with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and organizations make her an outstanding leader for USADF and an asset to those we serve.”

Ms. Berenbach spoke about the challenges in Africa and tangible accomplishments of USADF, both from its grassroots, African-led development model, as well as its economic outcomes among marginalized groups. “It is an honor to lead USADF,” Ms. Berenbach said. “USADF has a special role to play in Africa’s present and future, to tackle development challenges by supporting local development and creating inclusive strategies. I take seriously the goal of creating what many call a ‘modern development enterprise.’” She defined this to include harnessing the power of local actors and sustainable and profitable cooperatives and business entities, using best practices and applying evidence-based solutions, and leveraging resources and support amongst different constituencies.

Mr. Leslie reiterated USADF’s commitment to the mission and focus of USADF, and expressed his and the Board’s pleasure that Shari is leading the organization and building upon the significant achievements of Lloyd Pierson, head of the Agency from 2007-12. USADF’s economic development grants program produces positive change in over 20 conflict and post-conflict countries. President Berenbach looks forward to expanding the Foundation’s reach and impact in 2013 and beyond.



USADF is a public corporation in the federal government working directly with marginalized populations. USADF promotes African ownership of development solutions and fosters hope and goodwill. More than 1.1 million Africans in vulnerable households and communities are benefitting from USADF’s programs. See www.USADF.gov.