

## **BHF Newsletter**

### **E-News for Friends of the BHF: June 2003**

The Business Humanitarian Forum brings the resources, energy and creativity of the private sector to bear on the world's most pressing humanitarian problems, promoting economic development, human security and well-being.

#### **HEADLINES**

##### **Russell and Whitehead Named Honorary Co-Chairmen of BHF**

George F. Russell, Jr. and The Honorable John C. Whitehead have been named as the Honorary Co-Chairmen of the Business Humanitarian Forum. Russell was for many years the Chairman of the Frank Russell Company, an investment management firm based in Seattle, Washington. He is now Chairman of Sunshine Management Services. Russell is also Chairman of the Board of the National Bureau of Asian Research, based in Seattle, and Co-chairman of the East-West Institute of New York.

The Honorable John C. Whitehead was Chairman of the investment bank Goldman Sachs, Deputy Secretary of State, and Chairman of the Board of the International Rescue Committee. Most recently he has been Chairman of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, established to determine the future use of the site of the World Trade Towers.

Both Russell and Whitehead were among the founders of the Business Humanitarian Forum in 1999, and have been strong supporters of the BHF since that time.

##### **MoU Signed with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

A broad-gauged Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of the UNDP and the BHF, providing for cooperation between the two organizations in pursuing their activities in the field of economic reconstruction in post-conflict regions. Specific joint projects will be subject to more detailed agreements, but this overall MOU recognizes the value of mutual cooperation, and provides a framework for the development of individual projects.

##### **Afghanistan Projects Advance**

During a visit to Kabul in May, the BHF's Managing Director, Ms. Eleonore Kopera, and Project Manager, Emily Alvarez, advanced several of the BHF's Afghanistan partnership projects:

**Generic Medicines Production Facility:** A project document outlining arrangements for construction and development of this facility was jointly submitted to the Afghan Minister of Health by the UNDP Country Office for Afghanistan and the BHF. This document will be signed among the participating parties, including the European Generic Medicines Association (EGA), in July, when the project will move into the construction phase.

**Rehabilitation of Kabul Flour Mill:** The BHF representatives had several meetings with the Ministry of Light Industries in order to move this BHF project forward. The project has generated considerable interest and support among the international community,

since local production of quality, fortified flour will have an important impact on the lives and health of many people in Afghanistan, and will also encourage Afghan farmers to plant wheat crops. The World Food Programme (WFP), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), have expressed interest in being official partners in this project, which will eventually involve rehabilitation of the five industrial flour mills in Afghanistan. Successful completion will permit the WFP to buy flour locally, eliminating transportation costs and helping to develop domestic production capacity.

**Furniture and building Materials Factories:** With an Afghan businesswoman partner, the BHF representatives inspected two plots of land that will be used for the construction of a furniture factory and sewing shop and a brick and cement building block factory. Architectural plans are currently being drawn up for these two facilities. This project is a rare example of an Afghan woman entrepreneur, and has drawn support from women's groups.

### **Project for AIDS Clinic in Africa**

At a meeting in Geneva organized by the BHF, the Comunità di St. Egidio, a Catholic lay organization based in Rome, made a presentation on its clinics in Mozambique for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of the AIDS virus during childbirth. The St. Egidio program has had 100% success in preventing such transmission during the period of two years during which it has been operating. Subsequently the BHF entered into discussion with the Swiss Red Cross with a view to developing similar clinics in another African country with a very high rate of HIV/AIDS infection. The BHF will be organizing another meeting in Geneva to generate interest from the private sector and to enlist support from specific companies for the MTCT clinics program. If successful, this effort would be replicated in other parts of Africa as well.

### **French Version of E-Newsletter Now Available**

A French friend of the BHF has generously volunteered to translate this E-Newsletter into French. Starting with this edition, the E-Newsletter will therefore be available in both English and French. If you are receiving the E-Newsletter in English and would prefer to receive it in French, please send an e-mail to the address shown below, indicating your preference.

## **KEY MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS 2003**

### **Sudanese Minister of Humanitarian Affairs Visits BHF**

The Minister of State for Humanitarian Affairs of Sudan, Mr. Mohamed Yousif Abdalla, visited the BHF in Geneva on June 18 for a meeting focussed on possibilities for cooperative projects in Sudan. BHF President Maresca, recalling his earlier meeting with the Sudanese Minister of Finance and the subsequent round-table discussion sponsored by the BHF on possibilities for post-conflict reconstruction in Sudan, briefed Minister Yousif on the model the BHF has developed for specific development projects involving companies and local investors, especially in post-conflict regions. It was agreed that the two sides would have further discussions to identify priority sectors for development, and companies which may be interested in participating.

### **Presentation at Management Institute in Lausanne**

BHF President Maresca recently gave a lecture on corporate responsibility to the Program

for Executive Development (PED) at the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Lausanne, Switzerland.

**Presentation at UN Training Conference in Sofia**

BHF Project Manager Emily Alvarez made a presentation on the BHF's approach to public-private project development at a UN conference in Sophia, Bulgaria in April. The conference was part of the United Nations Staff College's program to train UN staff on the importance and the practical issues of working in partnership with the private sector.

**Presentation at UN Conference in New York**

BHF Managing Director Eleonore Kopera made a presentation on public-private cooperation at a UN Global Compact Policy Dialogue meeting in New York in June. Ms. Kopera presented examples from Afghanistan on how private sector companies contribute to post-conflict reconstruction by providing their expertise and resources and working with the UN. The projects presented, developed by the BHF in partnership with UNDP, focus on the rehabilitation of Afghanistan's productive infrastructure in sectors of need such as food, medicines, construction and electricity. These projects are carried out in partnership with companies, the Afghan private sector, and the Afghan government.

BHF personnel are available for speaking assignments on subjects related to the work of the BHF, on a mutually-convenient basis.

For further information on the BHF, please visit our website, at [www.bhforum.ch](http://www.bhforum.ch)

For inquiries and comments please contact the BHF at [bhinfo@bhforum.ch](mailto:bhinfo@bhforum.ch) or by mail at:

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The Business Humanitarian Forum is a non-profit association registered under the laws of Switzerland. We welcome your support, which will help us to continue our work.

The Business Humanitarian Forum was established in 1999. Founders: Peter Bell, Jean Freymond, John Imle, John Maresca, Sadako Ogata, Vladimir Petrovsky, Jane and George Russell, Cornelio Sommaruga, John Whitehead and Robert Zoellick.