



IYF Global Partner Meeting

June 21, 2012

Opening Plenary

Opportunity for Action: The Urgency of Youth Employment

The magnitude of the global youth employment challenge cannot be over-stated. The combination of the demographic youth bulge, unprecedented levels of youth unemployment, and widespread youth activism during and since the Arab Spring highlights the importance of focusing attention on youth issues in ways that reflect the urgency of the task before us. The Opening Plenary will set the stage for the three-day meeting, with its focus on both the challenges and what is being done—and what more needs to be done—to bridge the opportunity divide for youth worldwide.

Welcome and Overview: **William S. Reese**, President and CEO, International Youth Foundation

Discussants:

- **Peter Woicke**, Former Executive Vice President and CEO, International Finance Corporation
- **Henrietta Holsman Fore**, Former Administrator, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Mr. Reese welcomed the 220 participants, from 46 countries, including 55 partners represented, who were attending this three-day event. Referring to a definition of “tipping point” as the moment of critical mass, a threshold, the boiling point, he noted: “We are in the midst of such a moment in our history, with young people demanding a greater voice in determining their futures, the right to quality education, and the right to work. We are here,” he said, “because as much progress as we’ve made, their call remains largely unanswered.” Referencing the enormous challenges facing young people as detailed in IYF’s *Opportunity for Action: Preparing Youth for 21st Century Livelihoods* paper, Mr. Reese called on the corporate, government, civil society, and youth leaders in the room to work even harder to bridge the opportunity divide. “We must hold ourselves accountable,” he said. “It’s up to us to act.”

Ms. Fore noted that the IYF paper provided a useful context for the conference discussions and underscored the importance of thinking big, scaling up, and consolidating our efforts. “Too often we’re all going off in different directions, and in the next decade the world will be even more volatile than it is today, with huge migrations of people looking for jobs... This is why this report is so timely.” She also highlighted the need for youth to be equipped with life and entrepreneurship skills to be successful. Peter Woicke also referred to the *Opportunity for Action* paper, saying: “The findings in this report are shocking, and a real wake up call to rethink how we deal with unemployed youth.” He added: “We must go beyond what we’re doing now. We need long-term, sustainable solutions, and we need them now.”

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Panel #1

Bridging the Opportunity Divide: A Call to Action to Address the Global Youth Employment Challenge

- **Andrea Taylor**, Director for North America Community Affairs, Microsoft
- **Fernando Jiménez-Ontiveros**, Deputy Managing Director, Multilateral Investment Fund, Inter-American Development Bank
- **Deepali Khanna**, Director, Youth Learning, The MasterCard Foundation
- **Beth Paige**, Mission Director, USAID/Jordan

Moderator: **Henrietta Holsman Fore**, Former Administrator, USAID

Ms. Taylor shared Microsoft’s initiatives such as Unlimited Potential—with its focus on preparing young people with the skills to be successful in the 21st century and strengthening communities around the world. Through her experience with that program and in the field, she noted how essential it is to have young people working with them as partners. “Young people must be at the table—because we need all resources at the table. Their partnership is essential.” Mr. Jiménez-Ontiveros told the participants that youth in the Latin America and Caribbean region face huge challenges, with 32 million youth not in school and not in jobs. Stressing the importance of working with families and local employers, he hailed the “New Employment Opportunities” initiative, the IYF/IDB initiative known as NEO, as an exciting new regional effort to scale up job training programs in the region and to recruit new companies and others to join. “We will use the convening power of the IDB to approach other governments to lend their support,” he said. “Scaling up is the name of the game.”

Ms. Khanna highlighted the work of the MasterCard Foundation in boosting entrepreneurship among youth in Sub-Saharan Africa. “In Africa, the young people are not the problem,” she said. “Give them the opportunities, and they will be part of the social transformation in Africa.” More emphasis has to be placed on keeping young people in secondary school and ensuring they have access to financial services to help start and grow their small businesses. In her remarks about USAID’s programs in Jordan, Ms. Paige told the group: “Yes, we need to think bigger, and scale up our work, but we also need to think smaller and work with families, or we will lose this battle.” The fact that most youth who are recruited into gangs, or terrorists camps, have some kind of learning disabilities demonstrates the critical importance of giving young people the skills and education they need to succeed. “If we don’t embrace them, someone else will,” she warned. “The Opportunity Report is a good foundation to further this kind of dialogue.”

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Keynote Address

Why Youth Matter: Christopher J. Nassetta, President and CEO, Hilton Worldwide

Introduction: **Douglas L. Becker**, Chairman and CEO, Laureate Education, Inc.;
Chairman, Board of Directors, International Youth Foundation

Keynote Address: **Christopher J. Nassetta**, President and CEO, Hilton Worldwide

In introducing the keynote speaker, Doug Becker explained why he was so pleased that Mr. Nassetta was joining the IYF Board of Directors. “We wanted a flagship company in the hospitality sector committed to offering a career ladder for young people who were getting their first jobs,” he said. “Plus, Chris has a passionate commitment to young people.” In his opening remarks, Mr. Nassetta talked about his most important job in life – being the father of six daughters. He then added: “We *all* share a world with 1.3 billion young people about to enter adulthood. Nothing could be more important than making sure they have opportunities.” Referring to Hilton Worldwide’s new partnership with IYF, he said the company would work to develop its ongoing work in local communities and deepen its relationships with local youth organizations. He also said he was committed to build greater corporate support within the travel and tourism industry to help young job seekers prepare for decent first jobs, then enterprising careers. “I believe that in every community across this earth, there is a future leader who can transform his or her village, town, city or country and as a result, change our world for the better,” he said. “They are the keys to resolving the entrenched problems that our generation has failed to fix...their achievements will clearly benefit us all.”

Panel #2

Providing Solutions: What Companies Are Doing to Employ and Engage Vulnerable Youth

- **William Lane**, Washington Director, Caterpillar
- **Martha Herrera-Gonzalez**, Director, Communications and Social Responsibility, CEMEX, Mexico
- **Jane Nelson**, Director, Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School of Government
- **Patricia Devereux**, Group Head, Corporate Philanthropy and Citizenship, MasterCard Worldwide

Moderator: **Peter Shiras**, Executive Vice President, International Youth Foundation

Mr. Lane talked about the new partnership between IYF and Caterpillar to help young unemployed youth in eleven countries to become employable. “We are doing this because it’s a long-term benefit to these countries, not short term benefit to our company,” he explained. “We need good companies and good policies to create jobs, and that’s why we’re so excited to be working with a partner like IYF.” He also underscored the power of partnerships to make a difference—and “move the needle” on these issues. Ms. Devereux talked about MasterCard’s commitment to financial inclusion as part of its commitment to helping young people realize their potential, as well as her company’s current work with IYF in India. “How do we help small businesses to grow? Help young people access capital and entrepreneurial skills and mentoring,” she said. “Companies can do more to give young people a public voice and a public platform,” said Jane Nelson. “It’s not just about listening to young people, it’s being accountable to them,” she said, calling on companies to get more young people on their boards, to invite them to participate on public forums like this one, and by setting up youth advisory boards. Ms. Nelson also noted that while individual public/private partnerships are important, there

is also “enormous potential” in developing country-level and regional partnerships between businesses, youth, and government.

When asked about why her company joined the “New Employment Opportunities” (NEO) initiative in Latin America, Martha Herrera-Gonzalez offered a long list of reasons. “We wanted to work with a strong, long-term alliance that has a real impact; we wanted to engage with youth; we wanted to grow as a company, and to do that we need a prosperous community and motivated youth; we want others to believe what we believe; and we want to be a broker in the community to mobilize others to be part of NEO.”

Panel #3

Youth Voices: Creating Educational, Economic, and Civic Opportunities

- **Naadiya Moosajee**, Co-Founder, South Africa Women in Engineering, South Africa; Member, Board of Directors, International Youth Foundation
- **Dina Buchbinder**, Founder and CEO, *Deport-es para Compartir*, Mexico
- **Tania Matsinhe**, Nkaringa Centre of Excellence, Mozambique
- **Pedro Amorim**, Food and Beverage Manager, Hilton Hotels and Resorts, Orlando, United States

Moderator: **Nick Martin**, President, TechChange, United States

The panelists responded to a number of questions from moderator Nick Martin. When asked what they considered an equal partner, Pedro Amorim talked about his goal of being a leader in his community and his company. He believes a good partner needs to have real credibility and take these issues of youth seriously. He added: “I have a passion for hospitality, and you need to have your heart set on what you want to do.” Dina explained: “My organization promotes teamwork to build a vision together, so I would want that kind of partnership with a donor or another NGO: it’s the only way to achieve a profound transformation.” Naadiya agreed, saying that “Finding a donor does not equal a blank check; it’s about getting a buy-in, getting in the trenches with us.” Tania suggested another way to identify a good partner. “This partner would look at me and my potential for growth, not just who I am today.”

The group also talked about the challenges of scaling up their work, even during a global recession. Dina is moving full steam ahead to expand her program. “In Mexico, we’ve been able to benefit 45,000 young people, all of very diverse backgrounds,” she said. “We want to grow this in other countries, to help develop a system of social entrepreneurs.” Drawing on the model of the Hilton hotels, which grew from one hotel to a global chain, Pedro underscored the need to market your ideas and build awareness. Naadiya warned against going to scale “for the point of scaling”—and said her organization is not yet ready to go to other countries. “It’s important to be strategic and know what your objectives are before trying to expand.”

During a discussion around the consequences of failure, a number of the panelists said that process, however painful, was a learning experience. “I see failure as an opportunity,” said Naadiya. “I know it’s hard to admit you’ve failed, but it also makes you appreciate your successes.” Tania told her own story: “I started a project; it took all of my money, and it failed; but if I had never tried, I would be constantly wondering, what if?” In closing, Naadiya said: “We’ve talked a lot about voices here today. We already have voices—we just need people to listen to us—and we need champions!”

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Presentation of the President Martti Ahtisaari Peacebuilder Award

Introduction: **Douglas L. Becker**, Chairman and CEO, Laureate Education, Inc.

Remarks by Awardee: **Dr. Rama Shyam**, Co-founder and Director, Society for Awareness, Harmony, and Equal Rights (SAHER), India

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Becker talked about the extraordinary diplomatic and peace-building career of Martti Ahtisaari, the 2008 Nobel Peace Laureate in whose name this award has been established. He linked President Ahtisaari's commitment to peace building to the ongoing work of the inaugural awardee, Dr. Rama Shyam, a YouthActionNet® Fellow who co-founded the Society for Awareness, Harmony, and Equal Rights (SAHER) in India to combat alienation and violence in her community through inter-faith cooperation. "Just as these youth need our support, we need their energy and creativity to scale up game-changing initiatives around the world," Mr. Becker said.

Rama described her efforts to bring greater understanding between Muslim and Hindu youth in her country, and then told a story about a young man who had been picked up and sent to jail after the sectarian riots in the early 1990s. "He was terribly beaten in jail, but instead of being angry, he decided no other young person should go through what he did." This young man started a cricket club for youth, and started staging plays—all to bring young people together in a peaceful way. "It just shows how a bitter experience can be transformed into magnificent positive power," she explained. SAHER now reaches over 400 Indian youth every year through educational outreach activities. "Thank you IYF for believing in us, and in what we do," she said. Rama concluded with her own "call to action" to all who want to work for peace. "Build relationships with one person who has a different background, who you consider the 'other' and look for issues that touch people's lives. That means," she said, "you need to create a system of trust that starts with yourself. If you trust yourself, then others will trust you."