



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

From the Chairman

I am deeply honored to serve as Chair of the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for 2003. I know that by working together the Board can make a tremendous difference in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It is a grave and weighty task, and I know that the Fund is ready to take it on. I look forward to being an active spokesman and advocate for the Fund.

One of my objectives as Board Chair is to ensure that the Board is open and transparent, effective and productive. By the end of my term, I hope we will have created an institution that continually attracts new investors and encourages those already involved to increase their pledges.

It is important always to refer back to the purpose of the Global Fund: to attract, manage and disburse additional resources through a new public-private partnership that will make a sustainable and significant contribution to the reduction of infections, illness and death, thereby mitigating the impact caused by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in countries in need, and contribution to poverty reduction as part of the Millennium Development Goals.

Partnership is fundamental to our way of working. I intend to tap into the power and potential of civil societies in areas afflicted by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. The creation of strong public-private partnerships is already making a difference in this fight. The Country Coordinating Mechanisms, or CCM, must increase the engagement of civil society, including churches, medical practices and voluntary associations, in the development of proposals, implementation of projects, and monitoring and evaluation. I would especially like to see more chambers of commerce and business associations encouraged to serve on and consult with CCMs. We must encourage, broaden, and strengthen the relationships that already exist and build new ones. The problems are simply too big to exclude any sector of society.

The success of my tenure will be judged by my ability to generate involvement at every level. Resource

mobilization is essential to the Fund's operation but there is more than one way to mobilize resources – and dollars are not the only valuable currency. There is a wealth of technical expertise and assistance that has been developed by multilateral organizations, individual nations, and NGOs. Coordinated assistance would be just as valuable as every dollar the Fund receives.

As the Fund grows, the roles of the Board and the Secretariat must become better defined and more distinct. Both are essential for the Fund's operations and effectiveness, and I look forward to working with both. The Board brings together knowledge, experience, and financial backing. For its part, the Secretariat has been given its mandate. It has done great work under difficult circumstances but must continue to carry out the directives of the Board. The Board must allow the Secretariat to focus on negotiating grant agreements and getting money out the door to the lifesaving programs we support. We have at last reached the stage where the Fund can function on its own – now we must focus on ensuring that it is an organization that will endure.

I am more committed than ever to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and I look forward to the next year with enthusiasm and optimism.

[Tommy Thompson is Secretary of Health and Human Services (equivalent to Minister of Health) in the US government, and head of the US delegation to the Global Fund board. At the January 2003 board meeting he was elected Chair of the board for a one year term, possibly renewable for a second year.]

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