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## Fight against poverty must not be abandoned

By Jennifer Potter and Daniel J. Evans  
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AS the United States and the broader international community navigate the current economic crisis, we must not allow the progress made against global poverty to be undermined. Reducing global poverty is not only a moral obligation — it is also central to our national interest. Our own economic health and security are inextricably linked to the prosperity and security of the rest of the world.

Global poverty is at the root of some of the most significant challenges affecting our world today, and reducing it is one of the most powerful steps we can take in creating a better future for us all. Currently, more than 2.5 billion people are living on less than \$2 a day — a third of the population sharing our increasingly interdependent globe. The time is now for the United States to show leadership in providing economic opportunity to people living in poverty. And business has a critical role to play.

The Seattle-based Initiative for Global Development (IGD) recently convened the leaders of some of America's most prominent businesses at a summit in our nation's capital, to advance a bold strategy to reduce global poverty. Gen. Colin Powell challenged

attendees to mobilize the business community and leverage its strengths in the fight against poverty. National-security adviser Gen. James L. Jones invited summit participants to share with the Obama administration their expertise and recommendations on how to strengthen U.S. development policy. We look forward to working with the administration and members of Congress on this important task.

IGD's primary recommendation will be to make global development a strategic priority placed at the heart of U.S. foreign policy. Too many live on too little, and we should support them in their efforts to escape poverty by enacting a coherent and cost-effective system of foreign assistance that is accountable for producing results. With smarter foreign-aid policies and critical investments in infrastructure, we can pave the way for prosperous, stable communities abroad.

We will also call for improved access to the U.S. market for products from the poorest countries, so that they can trade their way to higher productivity and growth. Those of us living in the most trade-dependent state in the union understand the connection between trade and raising standards of living. Creating greater prosperity around the world will not only create jobs and economic opportunity in the developing world but also here at home, in the form of new markets and new customers for U.S. goods and services.

An important element of the summit was the launch of Frontier 100. This new initiative brings together highly successful CEOs from frontier markets with U.S. CEOs to collaborate in business leadership and share successful models for reducing poverty through enterprise growth. The first class of frontier CEOs is African and represents companies with average annual revenues of more than \$100 million.

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## **Fight against poverty must not be abandoned** *continued*

These business leaders, many of whom participated in the summit, have seen firsthand the economic possibilities on the continent and have invaluable insights into the challenges entrepreneurs in their countries face. Their experiences can help make private investment more sustainable, benefiting both our businesses and those of the developing world.

Working to reduce poverty is our shared responsibility as business leaders and citizens and makes good business sense. Let us make this time in history memorable for the opportunities we saw amid extraordinary challenges, and for the way we worked together to build a safer, more prosperous future.

The Initiative for Global Development (IGD) is a national alliance of business leaders that champions effective solutions to global poverty. Global poverty is at the root of many of the world's greatest challenges and IGD believes that dramatically reducing it is one of the most powerful steps we can take in creating a better future for us all. For more information, visit [www.igdleaders.org](http://www.igdleaders.org).

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