GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS FORUM: *Investing in People*

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CHAMPIONING WOMEN'S RIGHTS, FIRST LADY OF GABON APPOINTED GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS FORUM AMBASSADOR

First Lady Sylvia Bongo Ondimba To Lead Key Development Initiatives

New York, NY (13 June, 2011) - In a statement at United Nations Headquarters on 8th June 2011, the Global Partnerships Forum (GPF) was honored to announce the appointment of the First Lady of Gabon, Madame Sylvia Bongo Ondimba, as GPF Ambassador, recognizing her leadership as a champion of women's health and development issues in Gabon and throughout Africa. Her Excellency is committed to playing an increasingly crucial role in Africa's public health policy and stands as an important figure in the fight against HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality.

Addressing an audience at the United Nations, Mr. Amir Dossal, Founder and Chairman of the Global Partnerships Forum, praised the First Lady's work on behalf of Africa's most needy and marginalized citizens. Mr. Amir Dossal commended the First Lady's tireless support of Millennium Development Goals stating, "the international community salutes the First Lady of Gabon, and her organization, the Sylvia Bongo Ondimba Foundation, for her vision and energy to improve the plight of vulnerable and disadvantaged people around the world."

Dr. Peter Rajsingh, a GPF Founding Partner and Board member spoke of the First Lady's motivations noting that "beyond her state duties, integral to the First Lady's Foundation is a steadfast belief that the most disadvantaged in society are also the most susceptible to illness. Accordingly, today Her Excellency is committing her efforts to the health and wellbeing of women and children not only in Gabon, but across all of Africa."

As part of her core focus, the First Lady has pledged to deliver 25,000 HIV testing kits to health districts across Gabon, while actively collaborating in a Pan African coalition - the Organization of African First Ladies against AIDS - with the objective of fighting the pandemic on behalf of Africa's most vulnerable, namely, women and children.

Besides her commitment to improve maternal and child health, priorities of the First Lady's Foundation are to increase women empowerment by promoting women entrepreneurship through microcredit and by strengthening capacity building for the civil society.

Additionally, the First Lady helped bring about recognition of June 23rd as "International Widows Day" by the United Nations. This is part of an international campaign to raise awareness for the rights of widows and their children around the world. The issue was first brought to the global stage by the Loomba Foundation whose Founder, Lord Raj Loomba, and President, Mrs. Cherie Blair, worked for over a decade to promote this important cause. They joined forces with the Republic of Gabon and the First Lady last year.

Mr. Amir Dossal, Founder and Chairman of the Global Partnerships Forum, and Dr. Peter Rajsingh, a Founding Partner and Board member, both affirmed that "the GPF is deeply honored to welcome The First Lady as a Global Partnerships Forum Ambassador, and applauds Her Excellency and the Sylvia Bongo Ondimba Foundation for their admirable work raising standards of youth education, promoting the advancement of women and bringing about social change to improve the plight of vulnerable and disadvantaged people around the world."

GPF Board member Mr. Charles Moore summarized this significant alliance stating, "As a dynamic international platform working to address the most pressing global economic and social challenges, the Global Partnerships Forum strongly supports the First Lady of Gabon and her Foundation in their important initiatives for Africa. GPF is delighted to be collaborating with the First Lady and looks forward to helping her achieve critical development goals for Africa through innovative partnerships and other forms of cooperation."

For more information on the Sylvia Bongo Ondimba Foundation, please visit:
www.fondationsylviabongoondimba.org

For more information on the Loomba Foundation and International Widows' Day, please visit:
www.theloombafoundation.org

For more information on the Global Partnerships Forum, please visit: www.globalpf.org

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