

Secretary-General Welcomes Philanthropic Initiatives to Support Africa

UN News Service

Hailing recent announcements by two major philanthropic organizations of plans to undertake massive development projects in Africa, Secretary-General Kofi Annan today expressed the hope that others would also come forward to help countries on the continent to fight poverty, hunger and disease.

Earlier this week, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation announced an alliance to contribute to a "Green Revolution" in Africa by dramatically increasing the productivity of small farms, starting with a \$150 million investment.

Also this week, George Soros and his Open Society Institute pledged \$50 million for the Millennium Villages Project of the Millennium Promise Organization.

In a statement issued by his spokesman, Mr. Annan said the two initiatives "represent the kind of clear, practical support needed to help give Africans living in rural areas, where the needs are greatest, the tools and support needed to help feed themselves and their children and pull themselves out of poverty."

Spokesman Yves Sorokobi voiced Mr. Annan hope that "these far-sighted actions will encourage others to step forward and support the work by the United Nations and other partners in assisting African countries in their fight against the challenges of poverty, disease and hunger."