

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**TOAST AT LUNCH MARKING 90th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

New York, 8 October 2009

ICC Chairman Victor Fung,
Mr. Jean Rozwadowski, ICC Secretary-General and member of the Global Compact Board,
Members of the ICC Executive Board
Members of the Executive Committee of the U.S. Council for International Business,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to join you today to mark the ICC's 90th anniversary. You were founded 90 years ago by visionary businessmen who were convinced that from the destruction of World War I, peace, prosperity and understanding between peoples and cultures could be built through cross-border trade and investment. That is as true today as it was then.

The ICC and the United Nations have been good partners since the UN's very founding. You were present at the San Francisco conference, and expressed enthusiastic support for the creation of the UN. Since 1946 you have enjoyed consultative status, and have contributed regularly to UN deliberations and activities.

You have mobilized the voice of business in support of peace and the rule of law.

You have promoted trade – knowing, as we do, that it is a powerful force for peace and prosperity.

You have supported the UN's fight against corruption.

You have raised the productive potential of the least developed countries by helping to create vibrant private sectors.

You have disseminated technology and know-how to those who need it most.

You have worked at the technical level with UN entities on trade law, arbitration, investment promotion and much else. Such efforts are not widely known. But they provide the soft infrastructure that the global market needs if it is to benefit millions producers and consumers around the world.

You have also helped the United Nations to open up and learn how to work with the private sector in a spirit of “principled pragmatism”. We greatly appreciate your efforts as a founding participant and advocate of the UN Global Compact.

Today we must take our partnership to the next level.

The most immediate challenge is climate change. Climate change is now at the top of the international agenda. This is where it belongs, since climate change will rewrite the global equation for development, peace and prosperity in the 21st century.

I appeal to you to do your part to help Governments seal a deal in Copenhagen in December. Science demands it. The global economy needs it. Business, too, has a great interest in an agreement that sends the right signals and incentives, and that unleashes investment and innovation.

The promise of a new era of sustainability is within reach. But so is the risk of repeating mistakes of the past by turning inward and putting narrow interests above the common good. We need your voice now to encourage Governments to be bold and to show the leadership we so urgently need.

I will also look to you to engage even more across the UN agenda, from poverty to post-conflict reconstruction. The global threats we face today can be met only if we work together.

Finally, let me draw your attention to next year's Global Compact Leaders Summit. At the last Summit, in 2007, enabled us to discuss corporate citizenship at the highest level and agree on the Compact's next steps. The initiative has grown since then, and so the Summit is shaping up as a good opportunity. I look forward to seeing you there.

Congratulations again on this special occasion. Thank you for your support. Let us toast: to the ICC, and to our strong partnership.