



After a Year of Peace, Key Players Assess Partnership Opportunities in Angola

Washington, DC, 26 June 2003: Recovering from a 27-year old civil war, Angola is transitioning into the world economy and political scene -- from its seat on the UN Security Council, to the government's recent pledge for greater transparency in oil revenues. Critical internal reforms, however, must be made in order to achieve sustainable peace and prosperity.

This was agreed upon by participants at a meeting organized by The Fund for Peace on June 24, 2003 in Washington, DC. Over 40 representatives from multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions and donor agencies joined representatives of the US and Angolan government to discuss Angola's post-conflict reconstruction.

The Fund for Peace Human Rights and Business Roundtable organized this off-the-record meeting as part of its series assessing multi-stakeholder partnerships and corporate social responsibility. Angola provided an example of how public-private partnerships might move the reform process along by pooling resources to achieve such critical aims as economic diversification, revenue transparency and human-capacity building. The Roundtable candidly discussed the rules of engagement and reputational risks that are involved in corporate, NGO and government partnering to achieve these aims.

Shared values, technical expertise and access to capital were noted as key criteria for partnerships. While recognizing that partnerships can increase efficiency and quality in development work, participants stressed the need for better information sharing among stakeholders to avoid duplication of research, wasted resources and misunderstanding. It was also stressed that host government and local civil society should play a stronger role in the planning of external actors' poverty-reduction and development strategies.

Some participants reported initial concerns about working with the private sector, despite their resources and technology, due to continuing controversies surrounding the role and behavior of foreign industries in developing countries. Regardless, the public sector highlighted the importance of learning about, and working with, private partners in Angola over the past year. Other participants suggested that public-private partnership projects should be coupled with a multi-sector push for political and economic policy reforms in order to achieve sustainable peace and poverty reduction in Angola.

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The Fund For Peace is a Washington-based NGO whose mission is to prevent war and alleviate the conditions that cause war. It promotes education and research for practical solutions and is a consistent advocate of promoting social justice and respect for the principles of constitutional democracy. For more information, please visit: www.fundforpeace.org.

Launched in 1997, The Fund for Peace Human Rights and Business Roundtable is the first forum designed for multinational businesses and human rights organizations to discuss issues of common concern in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust and confidentiality. Please visit our website at: <http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/hrbrt/hrbrt.php>.