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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **New Partnerships for Millennium Villages Project Announced:**

NEW YORK, September 21, 2009 – Before a diverse coalition of 250 partners and invited guests, the Second Annual Millennium Promise Partners’ Meeting convened today with several major partnership announcements. In attendance were President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi, President Wade of Senegal and President Museveni of Uganda. The meeting also included high-level representatives of other project participant countries, leaders from donor nations, heads of UN agencies and dozens of business, philanthropic, and non-governmental leaders from around the world.

“We are honored to announce these new partnerships, which demonstrate how all companies, organizations, governments and individuals can leverage their unique expertise and resources to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals,” says Millennium Promise CEO John W. McArthur. “We are grateful to be able to bring together such a diverse leadership coalition committed to ending extreme poverty, hunger, and preventable disease.”

The Millennium Villages, a joint project of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Millennium Promise and the United Nations Development Programme, reaches over 400,000 people in 14 rural areas in 10 sub-Saharan African countries and addresses basic needs in agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, and business development.

Partnerships newly announced include:

- **Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation** – The foundation has committed funding to support a Millennium Village in Ruhira, Uganda for the next five years. This pledge marks the foundation’s first international investment in its “commitment to community” outreach strategy.
- **Lenovo** – Lenovo announced a donation to Millennium Promise that will establish nine new school computer labs and 25 ICT kiosks in Millennium Villages throughout Africa. The donation will also cover supporting technologies to the Millennium Villages, including installation, technology training and additional ICT equipment.
- **SapientNitro** – SapientNitro, through the leadership of Millennium Promise Board Member Chris Clarke, is generously supporting Millennium Promise through a 5-year financial commitment and also leveraging its extraordinary creative marketing expertise to bolster Millennium Promise’s advocacy and outreach efforts on the Millennium Villages and the Millennium Development Goals.
- **UNAIDS** – The UN agency announced a new partnership with the Millennium Village project to stem the transmission of the HIV virus from mother to child. Mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV is a persistent problem in sub-Saharan Africa, with only 10 percent of HIV-infected women receiving the antiretroviral treatment that is nearly 99 percent effective at preventing MTCT. This new partnership with UNAIDS is directed at creating “MTCT-free Zones” in Millennium Villages where the coordinated, science-based application of emerging best-practices in the prevention of MTCT can be demonstrated in a cross-section of rural communities across the continent.

Millennium Promise welcomes these new partnerships and looks forward to working with its expanding alliance of supporters to help empower communities in rural sub-Saharan Africa to escape the poverty

trap and chart a course for self-sustaining development. For a complete list of partners – both new and existing – please see attachment.

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#### Millennium Promise

*The mission of Millennium Promise is to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals-eight globally endorsed objectives addressing the multiple dimensions of extreme poverty-in Africa by 2015. To that end, Millennium Promise uses a holistic approach to work with impoverished communities, national and local governments and partner organizations to implement high-impact programs aimed at stopping the cycle of poverty. Our work is premised on the belief that, for the first time in history, our generation has the opportunity to end extreme poverty, hunger and preventable disease. For more information, visit [www.millenniumpromise.org](http://www.millenniumpromise.org).*

#### About the Millennium Villages Project

*The Millennium Villages Project is a partnership between the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Millennium Promise and the United Nations Development Programme. The Millennium Villages are a proof of concept initiative to demonstrate that the Millennium Development Goals can be achieved in even the poorest and most remote rural communities in Africa by combining the best scientific and local knowledge to chart a course for ground-level, community-based support for agriculture, health, education, infrastructure and business development.*